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A N

A N S W E R

T O

Mr. HORACE WALPOLE's late Work,

ENTITLED,

HISTORIC DOUBTS on the REIGN and LIFE  
of King RICHARD the Third.

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A N S W E R

Mr. HORACE WAITE'S WORK

Historic Doubts on the REIGN and LIFE

of KING DAVID

AN ATTEMPT TO CORRECT HIM

IN HIS OWN ARGUMENTS

By F. W. G. of the Middle Temple

London

L O N D O N

Printed for B. WAITE, at Horace's Head, in Fleet Street

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Historic Doubts on the REIGN and LIFE  
O F  
King RICHARD the Third;  
O R,  
AN ATTEMPT TO CONFUTE HIM  
F R O M  
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By F. W. G. of the Middle Temple.

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*Decipimur specie reſti.*

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L O N D O N:  
Printed for B. WHITE, at Horace's Head, in Fleet-street.  
M.DCC.LXVIII.

A H

A H 2 W E R

Mr. Horace Warfield, Esq.

A H 2 W E R

Friend David, or Mr. Horace Warfield

My Dear Sir,  
I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th inst.

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AN  
ANSWER  
TO

Mr. HORACE WALPOLE's late Work,

ENTITLED,  
HISTORIC DOUBTS on the REIGN and LIFE  
of King RICHARD the Third.

**I**T may perhaps appear no small degree of presumption, that a man, who has spent half his life in the dry, jejune, insipid study of the law, in which, after all, with much pains and plodding, he confesses himself to have made but a very inconsiderable progress, should throw aside his *Coke on Littleton*, to wrangle with a gentleman of such refined taste and polite learning as Mr. Walpole, upon a subject, in which the latter has more than once given public proofs of his profound knowledge and erudition. His Catalogue of Royal and Noble Authors, and the Anecdotes of Painting, are pieces that will always

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meet

meet with greatest esteem and applause. The very name therefore of *Horace Walpole* to a work, as it must raise every body's expectation, hurried me to send, without loss of time, to my bookseller for the *Historic Doubts on the Life and Reign of King Richard the Third*; and having read it through with much attention, I will confess upon the whole, it in no wise diminishes my opinion of that gentleman's extensive learning and great ingenuity.

Nevertheless, with great deference to Mr. Walpole, and upon the strength of the encouragement he himself gives those "who have a mind to canvass this subject," (for which purpose he has kindly given us a concise recapitulation of all his arguments,) I shall beg leave to make a few observations, in which, if I cannot avoid declaring, that I rather differ from that learned gentleman in my notions of Richard the Third, and find it difficult to prevail on myself to admit, and assent to all he has alledged, in order to white-wash so black a character, I hope he will pardon me.

It will very possibly be said, and perhaps with no small colour of reason, that my presumption is yet greater, when I confess, that many of the authors which Mr. Walpole quotes, I have never read, have not in my possession,



possession, and even have not time at present to consult. But as his chief recourse seems to be rather to argument, and reasoning, than to the facts as they are actually related by those authors ; I think I can by the same species of logic prove, that Mr. Walpole's quotations do not always serve him in the purpose he thinks, and that there yet remains strong reason to suspect Richard the Third was the very wicked, cruel, tyrant he has by most historians been represented to us.

In the course of this discussion, I shall make use of the convenience Mr. Walpole has been so good to throw in my way, and follow the heads of the recapitulation, as they are drawn up before me.

He states it then as proved,

*First, That Fabian, and the authors of the Chronicle of Croyland, who were contemporaries with Richard, charge him directly with none of the crimes since imputed to him, and disculpate him of others.*

*Secondly, That John Rous, the third contemporary, could know the facts he alledges but by hearsay ; confounds the dates of them ; dedicated his work to Henry the Seventh ; and is an author to whom no credit is due, from the lies and fables with which his work is stuffed.*

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Thirdly,

Thirdly, *That we have no authors, who lived near the time, but Lancastrian authors, who wrote to flatter Henry the Seventh, or who spread the Tales which he invented.*

To consider these three heads first, before we look any farther into Mr. Walpole's *probata*, I shall begin with the last, as the most general; and here shall beg leave to ask, if there had been any authors, who were partizans of the house of York, might we have given more credit to them, than to Lancastrians? The whole nation, we may suppose, was either the one or the other; so that it were absurd for us in this case to expect any impartial author. Could the York historians be believed to write any thing, but what favoured that house? and would they have published any circumstances to prejudice it, and render it detestable in the eyes of all mankind, both then and thereafter? It is very possible therefore, for this reason, that no partizans of the house of York would undertake an history of Richard the Third, conscious they could not stick to truth, if they drew any but a most horrid picture of that monarch; and in his life-time, how could they dare to write any thing but his panegyric? Had they staid till after his death, and then declared all they knew concerning Richard, it would have been only doing honour to Henry, who had so greatly contributed to the nation's happiness by ridding them of such a monster: and  
may

may be too, Mr. Walpole might then have said, they only wanted to make their peace with, and pay court to, the *Welch Intruder*. In short, Mr. Walpole might as well tell us, that we should at this time give no credit to any Whig historians, in regard to the characters of James or Charles the Second, or Charles the First, because these writers may be supposed enemies to the Stuart family, and partial to the house of Hanover. Would it be reasonable then, I beg to know, that we should attend to Tory and Jacobite writers?

Now, to come to Fabian, and the Chronicle of Croyland, contemporary with Richard, who, Mr. Walpole takes notice, "charge that prince directly with none of the crimes " since imputed to him, and disculpate him of others." I ask, were they Yorkists? If not, they made a sufficient bold step, I think, to charge him *indirectly* with crimes, which we find afterwards, writers farther removed, and out of the reach of resentment, made no scruple to assert positively. Fabian did not dare to say more with regard to the murder of Edward Prince of Wales, than " that " he was by the king's servants slain;" and the Chronicle of Croyland calls it, " *Ultricibus quorundam manibus.*" Yet Hall, who, Mr. Walpole owns, wrote very near that time, and who might assert it with impunity, is very particular



ticular as to the murder of that young Prince, and every person that stood about the King.

I will grant there is great reason in supposing the Lancastrians might have a pleasure, view, and interest in blackening the house of York : yet, as they dared not indulge their inclinations to this, during the life of Richard, in propagating too many truths, and divulging too many secrets of state concerning him, (for it is very possible he would not have cared much as to what they might have published relative to his brothers, Edward the Fourth, or the Duke of Clarence) ; neither is it likely they would , in the succeeding reign of Henry the Seventh, have ventured to give offence to the queen, by calumniating and scandalizing her *whole* family. And I cannot conceive, that whatever those historians may have related of Richard the Third in particular, can in any wise be said to be a blackening of the house of York, to which he seems by all accounts to have been as formidable an enemy as any Lancastrian ; for what else can he be called, in bastardizing his mother's issue, all but himself ; in murdering his brother the Duke of Clarence ; and not only dethroning, but making away with, in some manner or other, his nephews Edward the Fourth, and the Duke of York. For these facts, whether true or false, are imputed to *Richard* only, by the Lancastrian writers ;



and with intent, as Mr. Walpole would have it, to blacken the whole house of York.

John Rous<sup>a</sup>, *the third contemporary*, Mr. Walpole tells us<sup>b</sup>, *could know the facts he alledges but by hearsay, confounds the dates of them, dedicated his work to Henry the Seventh, and is an author to whom no credit is due, from his lies and fables with which his work is stuffed.*

Notwithstanding this, Mr. Walpole can make use of his authority, when it answers his purpose, viz. as to the person of Richard, and with regard to this King's behaviour to the young Earl of Warwick<sup>c</sup>. And though Rous knew nothing but by *hear-say*, Mr. Walpole agrees that he was an *eye-witness* in both these instances<sup>d</sup>; and as to the latter, he particularly says<sup>e</sup>, “ Rous is the  
“ more to be credited for this fact<sup>f</sup>, as he saw the  
“ Earl of Warwick in company with Richard at War-  
“ wick, the year before, on the progress to York, which  
“ shews the King treated his nephew with kindness, and  
“ did not confine him till the plots of his enemies thick-  
“ ening, Richard found necessary to secure such as had  
“ any pretensions to the crown.”

<sup>a</sup> P. 104.

<sup>b</sup> p. 122.

<sup>c</sup> p. 62.

<sup>d</sup> p. 106.

<sup>e</sup> p. 62, in the note.

Now

Now if this was the case, this Johnny Rous, who lived at the top of a rock, had opportunities however of seeing his Majesty and the Royal Family, and consequently might likewise have learned a little what was stirring in the great world from the nobility attending upon the King, some of whom might have been his old acquaintance before he retired, and some of them curious to visit an ingenious man, who had retired in that manner from society to the top of a rock, in order to give up all his time to study and meditation. Besides, why should we not suppose that, in those days, though there were neither stage-coaches, post-chaifes, nor turnpike-roads, yet some method or other was contrived for coming up to town now and then, to see one's friends and hear a little news? It does not follow, because John Rous lived an hermit on Guy's Cliff in Warwickshire, that he saw nobody or heard from nobody, who had any connections with the metropolis, or any knowledge of the disturbances there, created by the bloodshed and tyranny of the King.

As I confess above, that I am entirely unacquainted with these authors, and argue purely from the specimens Mr. Walpole has given us of them; so I must declare I firmly believe, could I find time to consult them, I should yet find many authorities that would perhaps not support Mr. Walpole's hypotheses so strongly. But leaving this task for the  
 nice

nice curiosity of others, who may have more time and opportunity, I will now proceed to examine the facts, which Mr. Walpole sums up as demonstrated on his side.

*“ The murder of Prince Edward, son of Henry the Sixth, was committed by King Edward’s servants, and is imputed to Richard by no contemporary.”*

How should any contemporary dare to impute such a crime to Richard? What would this arbitrary monarch have done to such an audacious trumpeter? Have we not, in these more civilized days, seen a man imprisoned and outlawed, for daring to assert that the King’s speech was dictated by the minister? and does Mr. Walpole imagine a writer, who would, in those barbarous times assert that his sovereign was a murderer, would not have been torn to pieces by wild horses? The first, I think, as I have above observed, who dared to assert such a fact with impunity, declared it, and is very circumstantial, naming the very persons who were present aiding and abetting in this bloody crime. Nor can Mr. Walpole, if he will but please to consider, with any justice, charge this author with a design purely of blackening the house of York; for how could any scandal he propagated of Richard affect that whole Royal Family? Besides, if that was really the drift and malicious purpose



pose of the Lancastrian author, why did he not tell a bold lye at once, and say either that Edward the Fourth knocked the Prince down with his gauntlet dead as a door-nail, or that it was by his Majesty's command that he was slain by the Princes of the blood-royal, and others who stood about him? Then he would have taken in all the chiefs of the house of York, and he might likewise have gone a little farther, and made even the Queen, and King Edward's mother, have an hand in this murder:—but I forget,—we are told by and by, I believe, that the ladies too did not escape the malevolent aspersions of the Lancastrians, though of another nature.

The next point Mr. Walpole states as proved, is,

*“ That Henry the Sixth was found dead in the Tower; that it was not known how he came by his death; and that it was against Richard's interest to murder him.”*

I cannot allow, at any rate, that Mr. Walpole has given us the least proof of this. That Henry the Sixth was found dead in the Tower, he quotes the authority of the Continuator of the Chronicle of Croyland; but I cannot understand from that whole quotation, that it was not known how he came by his death; only that the Historian, for some reason or other, did not choose to tell us  
all



all he knew ; and Mr. Walpole himself conceives he had suspicions. “ *Parcat Deus, says the Historian, & spatium pœnitentiæ ei donet, quicumque sacrilegas manus in Christum Domini ausus est immittere. Unde et agens tyranni, patiensq; gloriosi Martyris titulum mereatur.*”—To this Mr. Walpole is pleased to observe in these words, “ That the assassin deserved the appellation of tyrant, “ evinces that the Historian’s suspicions went high.”—“ In strict construction he should mean Edward, because, as “ he is speaking of Henry’s death, Richard, then only “ Duke of Gloucester, could not properly be called a tyrant. But as monks were not good grammatical critics, “ I lay no stress on this objection. *I do think he alluded to Richard.*” Can any thing be clearer ? And this Historian was probably no Lancastrian, for Mr. Walpole corroborates his notion that *Richard* was pointed at particularly, and not Edward ; the writer having, he says, “ a true monkish partiality to Edward, whose cruelty and “ vices he slightly noticed, in favour to that monarch’s “ severity to heretics and ecclesiastical expiations.” The Historian therefore I think went far enough in giving us so bold an hint concerning the King’s brother.—But here is Fabian, the oldest writer of those times, and whose authority anon went so far with Mr. Walpole, in regard to Richard’s innocence of the murder of Edward Prince of Wales.—Fabian must now be set aside, for he answers

Mr. Walpole's purpose no longer. . Let us see what he says: "Of the death of this Prince (Henry the Sixth) " divers tales wer told. But *the most common fame* went, " that he was sticken with a dagger by the handes of the " Duke of Glouceter."—Now I should be glad to know by what kind of ratiocination Mr. Walpole concludes from the above two authorities, (for he brings no other) that Henry the Sixth came by his death, nobody knows how; and certainly not by the hands of Richard Duke of Gloucester, against whose interest it was, as he is going to prove, to murder that faint-like monarch, adored by the people. To this I answer, for that very reason, because he was a faint-like monarch, beloved by the people, it was Richard's interest, who probably had some deep-laid schemes in his head, to get that good, beloved King quite out of the way. For will Mr. Walpole undertake to prove, that in this year, 1768, he is able to penetrate into the mind that existed in Richard Duke of Gloucester, Anno Domini 1471, and can assure us no airy castles were building there, no stratagems forming?

" *Did Henry stand in his way, says he, deposed, imprisoned, and now childless?*"—What a question is this for a gentleman of Mr. Walpole's abilities and understanding! Was not Henry deposed and imprisoned, when by means of the Earl of Warwick he broke his confinement,

and contested once more his crown and kingdoms with the house of York? Was there not a possibility that he might, by the kind offices of some other friend, (for others I suppose he had, though Warwick was slain) escape from prison, and stir up fresh work for Edward the Fourth? It was therefore certainly much for the interest of this usurper, and consequently for Richard's, that Henry should be out of the way at any rate; and though he was childless, which he became by the *kind-hearted* office of Richard, for any thing Mr. Walpole has proved to the contrary, he might nevertheless be a troublesome spoke in Edward's wheel, as long as he lived; and the same hand which removed the Son, was as proper and likely as any, to dispatch the father out of the way. Besides, though Henry was childless, he was not above fifty, and I will leave it to an indefatigable antiquarian and chronologist as Mr. Walpole to discover the age of Margaret; then determine, whether it was not possible (supposing she could have contrived, by means of a golden key, or some other stratagem, to get at her husband, which I doubt not, for all she was then, I think, in France, she could) that there might yet have been issue to the house of Lancaster, which, to a deep and distant scheme-plotter, as there is no reason to doubt Richard was, might have created no small disturbances, and checked his extensive designs.

We



We come next to consider the murder of George Duke of Clarence, upon which subject Mr. Walpole pretends to have proved, "*That the Duke of Clarence was defended by Richard; that the parliament petitioned for his execution; that no author of the time is so absurd as to charge Richard with being the executioner; and that King Edward took the deed wholly on himself.*"

The first article is affirmed upon the relation of Hall, Hollingshed, and Stowe, "who, says Mr. Walpole, say not a word of Richard being the person who put the sentence in execution; but, on the contrary, they all say, he *openly resisted* the murder of Clarence." Be it so; I will not dispute this one point with him; for, as I insinuated before, I have not these authors in my library, and will not lose time in consulting them elsewhere. If Mr. Walpole has not disproved that Richard killed Edward Prince of Wales, and his father Henry the Sixth, as I think is pretty clear from what I have above observed, that he has not; and if he will not be found to have proved, that this same hero of his was innocent of the murder of his nephews, Edward the Fifth, and the Duke of York; he has gained a meer trifle towards whitewashing the black character of Richard, by appealing to Hall, Hollingshed, and Stowe, that his Royal Highness had no hand in the execution of George Duke of Clarence,



rence. Yet, Notwithstanding this assertion and appeal, he himself confesses, that Clarence and Glocester were upon indifferent terms ; for he tells us, from the Chronicle of Croyland, that there were certain disputes and jealousies betwixt the two brothers about a lady, (of which he gives us the whole story in the note) and farther adds from Habbington, that the “discontents (of the “Duke of Clarence) were secretly fomented by the Duke “of Glocester, who, he observes as from himself, certainly kept fair with the queen, Clarence’s declared “enemy, *and profited largely by the forfeiture of his brother.*” Upon this confession of Mr. Walpole, it appears evident, however, that Richard had an interest in the execution of his brother Clarence ; and if we cannot positively prove, that he himself was the executioner ; that he himself chopped off his head, or held him down in the barrel of Malmsey ; I believe it will be agreed by every body, that it was not likely he wept, or was much concerned for his death. We will therefore, upon the word of Mr. Walpole, and the Chronicle, allow that the parliament petitioned, “or the Speaker of the House of Commons demanded the execution of Clarence.” But how did King Edward take the whole deed upon himself ? — “Being solicited some time after to pardon a notorious “criminal, the King’s conscience broke forth, *Unhappy “brother ! for whom no man would intercede ! — yet ye all* “ can

“ *can be intercessors for a villain !* ” It is not impossible that Richard was one of these *intercessors*, in which case Edward’s speech was very smart and home : yet as to himself, he shewed by this fallacy of conscience, how tender he was, how much he had suffered on account of the death of his brother, which he would have prevented by a pardon, had he had the least room or opportunity given him for over-ruling the rigour of parliament. But when a part of the legislature, the representatives of the nation, in a body desired the execution of the King’s brother, would it not have been much censured, would it not have created discontents, which might have been attended with fatal consequences, if the King had shown such partiality to his own blood, as to have denied the nation the justice they demanded ? Powerful intercessors, however, might have furnished the King with an excuse for exerting his prerogative upon this occasion, which purely of himself he could not do. In short, I can in no wise agree, that the speech Edward made, as above cited, was assuming a merciless criminality to himself, but shewed a tender good heart.

Thus far then there appearing upon the whole no palpable proofs, no grounds for any opinion, that Richard was any other than what he is represented, and delivered down to us to have been, by the generality of writers in those

those days; we might, without going further, conclude, that all the rest of Mr. Walpole's arguments are of the same kind, built on very feeble foundations, and consequently that his hero King Richard was not incapable of the most horrid, abominable crimes. However, we will proceed, and come now to examine the Presumptions and authorities for the murder of Edward the Fifth, and his brother Richard Duke of York, charged to King Richard the Third. And here, in order to pave a way towards exculpating this tyrant, and making him a perfect, amiable character, Mr. Walpole has thought it most proper and methodical to prove certain *præmissæ*, which we will first consider separately.

1. "*That Richard's stay at York on his brother's death had no appearance of a design to make himself King.*" This being a matter of small consequence, I will take no notice of it. It is impossible to judge fairly of so trifling a circumstance at this distance of time.

2. "*That the ambition of the Queen, who attempted to usurp the government, contrary to the then established custom of the realm, gave the first provocation to Richard and the Princes of the blood-royal to assert their rights; and that Richard was solicited to vindicate those rights.*"

D

" King



“ King Edward the Fifth, Mr. Walpole tells us, (tho’  
 “ from the authority of Sir Thomas More, whose vera-  
 “ city he will not always pay great respect to) <sup>a</sup> was but  
 “ thirteen years of age when his father died, and kept his  
 “ court at that time at <sup>b</sup> Ludlow, under the tuition of  
 “ his maternal uncle Anthony Earl Rivers. Edward the  
 “ Fourth, on his death-bed, had patched up a reconcili-  
 “ liation between his wife’s kindred and the great Lords  
 “ of the court; particularly between the Marquis Dor-  
 “ set the Queen’s son, and the Lord Chamberlain Haf-  
 “ tings.”—From this account what are the proper ob-  
 servations and conclusions a man would naturally make ?  
 That the King, sensible of the exposed state of so very  
 young a successor; and very probably not altogether un-  
 aware of the ambitious mind of his brother Richard, had  
 not only left his son in the care and guardianship of his  
 mother’s brother, who could have no pretensions to the  
 crown, and consequently no interest in disturbing the  
 young king’s reign; but for a farther strengthening of  
 this safeguard for the infant, patched up, as Mr. Walpole  
 calls it, on his death-bed, (for in that situation he could  
 not do much more,) a reconciliation between his wife’s  
 kindred and the great Lords of the court. It should seem  
 from hence, that the dying King intended nothing more  
 positively, than that his son should be under the tuition of

<sup>a</sup> P. 15.<sup>b</sup> p. 21.



the Queen's relations, and not of the Princes of the blood-royal, whose thoughts perhaps he had suspicions of, and must have been able to have penetrated, better than Mr. Walpole, at the distance of two hundred and eighty-five years. And yet Mr. Walpole's arguments upon all these circumstances seem totally to arise from his great sagacity, and infallible penetration into the operations of certain minds in those days ; for as to authorities, and historians, he condemns them to all intents and purposes, nor will give them a grain of credit.

Now Edward the Fifth being left by his father in this condition, committed to the care of a tender mother and her relations, what was the first step to be taken ? To bring up the young King with safety to town, that he might be crowned, and reside in his metropolis. To this end she ordered, (for as she was his mother, and no guardian was appointed by any public authority, she was the proper person to order,) that he might be escorted by two thousand horse ; undoubtedly, we will suppose, to carry the late King's intentions into execution, and to prevent her son from falling into the hands of his uncle Richard, who, as Mr. Walpole seems not to have succeeded hitherto in vindicating him from the crimes imputed to him by historians, must remain the abominable character he is represented to us, (in which light, once for all, I

shall hereafter always consider him); and consequently, if even his designs were not known or suspected, was to be dreaded, and guarded against at any rate.

Nor can I conceive how it makes at all for Gloucester, that, after his brother on a death-bed, anxious and apprehensive for the great youth of his son, had patched up a reconciliation between the Queen's kindred and the great Lords of the court, some of these, (only seeming to yield in order to quiet the dying King, or taking new umbrage at the steps taken by the Queen,) revolted to Richard. It proves only this, that amongst the Lords of the court there were some villains, (no new thing!) and such as thought they could promote their private views best by adhering to the *Molitor rerum novarum*, Richard; perhaps only for the sake of creating disturbances, and fishing afterwards in troubled water. And for this end we can suppose Buckingham spirited up Gloucester,<sup>c</sup> whose plotting and labouring head he might not altogether be unacquainted with, communicating to him suspicions, that the Queen was endeavouring to seize the government during the minority of her son, into her hands, leaving them (Gloucester and Buckingham) mere cyphers in the state. This might

<sup>c</sup> A man in Gloucester's situation, full of such hazardous designs, with so much at stake, must be supposed to have flagged now and then in his spirits and resolution, and to stand in need of encouragement and stimulatives.

have produced a civil war, in which if Richard was killed, Buckingham was the nearer the crown, and need but have had recourse to murders, as Richard had, to have reached the throne. Mr. Walpole himself owns afterwards, <sup>d</sup> “ that Buckingham was influenced by his nearness to the crown, (which he shews by a genealogical table,) for it made him overlook, says he, his own alliance with the Queen, whose sister he had married.”

As to the notion, that no precedent authorized the Queen to assume the power she did, to exclude the Princes of the blood-royal from the administration, to which by the custom of the realm they were entitled, and to govern in concert with her own family; I conceive, with great submission to Mr. Walpole's understanding, that it is a mere notion of his own. If Joan, Princess Dowager of Wales, and widow of the Black Prince, had no share in the government of her son Richard the Second; it was probably because Edward the Third gave no intimations that he wished she should have any: she was very possibly too a woman, who might not have been so capable of undertaking this great charge, or had not the spirit necessary to dispute it with so many uncles as her son had. Besides, if we believe Mons. Rapin, she must have thought herself well off, that her son was so easily ac-

<sup>d</sup> p. 29, in the note.

known



knowned in possession of the crown, without contest or bloodshed ; and have comforted herself, that the Duke of Lancaster did no worse than, after paying homage to his nephew, taking upon himself the government during the minority.

As to Catharine de Valois, I think no nation upon earth would have suffered a woman, who, from being Queen-consort of so great a monarch as Henry the Fifth, could stoop to marry a *Sbentleman of Whales*, to assume the government of a kingdom, in preference to such able statesmen and generals as the Dukes of Bedford and Gloucester, uncles to Henry the Sixth. The dying King, besides, had, as Monf. Rapin tells us, desired particularly, that his brother the Duke of Gloucester might have the protectorate ; and if the parliament afterwards made a little alteration in the King's will, (for this government was actually settled by parliament within two months of the minor King's accession,) it was for peace and quietness sake ; to prevent jealousies between brothers, and not to put a disgrace on so deserving a prince as the Duke of Bedford.—If these facts are false, because they are related by so modern a writer as Rapin, I shall not trouble myself to look higher, seeing from Mr. Walpole's own declaration, that contemporaries can publish abominable lyes, and are no more to be credited than others.

For

For my part, I confess, I cannot help thinking Queen Elizabeth Woodville did according to her dying husband's intentions, and did very wisely, to prevent the King her son falling into the hands of his monster of an uncle, and the deceitful Buckingham. To shew how cautious the tender mother and prudent Queen was, lest she should create any ill-grounded alarms ; as soon as it was insinuated to her, that it would give great offence if the young King should be brought to London with so great a force as she had ordered, she wrote to Lord Rivers to countermand her first directions.

Why then should Mr. Walpole say,

That it was the ambition of the Queen, who attempted to usurp the government, contrary to the then established custom of the realm, which gave the first provocation to Richard and the Princes of the blood, to assert their rights ; and that Richard was solicited by the Duke of Buckingham to vindicate those rights ? when it is as consistent with reason to imagine, that it was a motherly tenderness, and a conformity to her dying husband's intention, which induced the Queen to prevent the government falling into the hands of such worthless villains as Richard and Buckingham ; and that the solicitations of

Buckingham were nothing but to have a finger in the pye, and to animate Richard in his already-planned dark designs.

I do not think it deserves any time to examine the credibility of Historians; of the author of the Chronicle of Croyland, whose continuator was one of the King's counsellors, and therefore to be admitted as fair evidence at one time, and to be considered as ignorant of the most important and most mysterious secrets of state at another time; of John Fabian, a merchant and sheriff of London, who mentions the death of Princes and revolutions of government with the same phlegm<sup>a</sup> and brevity as he would speak of the appointment of churchwardens; of Sir Thomas More, who is copied by Grafton and Hollingshed, and it is supposed *was thought an authentic writer then*; but being only under-sheriff of London, no more than eight and twenty years of age, and secretly marked with the displeasure of the crown<sup>b</sup>, was not likely to be furnished with materials from any high authority. All these writers, and others, of what sublime reputation soever,

<sup>a</sup> Vide p. 17.

<sup>b</sup> N.B. If it is necessary for a man to enjoy the favours of a court, in order to be furnished with authentic materials for compiling an history of a reign which is past, this however Mr. Walpole must allow, that Sir Thomas More, being marked at that time with the displeasure of the crown, could not have been biased by any respect, or courtesy to Henry the Seventh; and what he related of Richard the Third ought then to be the more depended on.—Sir Thomas could not have wrote to blacken the house of York, out of compliment to Henry.



are suspected or cry'd down, just as they corroborate or overthrow Mr. Walpole's hypotheses; and we find, throughout the whole work, that the same author from whom he produces *exhibits* to prove one assertion, he challenges as foresworn to make way for another.

Let us proceed then, in our examination of these *præmissæ*, upon which the disproof of the murder of Edward the Fifth, charged to Richard the Third, is made to depend.

To clear Richard then of this imputation, Mr. Walpole continues to demonstrate,

3. “ *That the preparation of an armed force, under Earl Rivers; the seizure of the Tower and treasure; and the equipment of a fleet by the Marquis Dorset, gave occasion to the Princes to imprison the relations of the Queen; and that though they were put to death without trial, (the only cruelty which is proved on Richard) it was consonant to the manners of that barbarous and turbulent age, and not till after the Queen's party had taken up arms.*”

Before I answer these points, it may not be amiss to observe, that notwithstanding Mr. Walpole's contempt

of Sir Thomas More's authority, who wrote his reign of Edward the Fifth, says he, as he wrote his Utopia, to amuse his leisure and exercise his fancy; he makes no scruple to state his chief facts from this Historian, some of which he does not seem to deny; and those he objects to, seem as reasonable, in my opinion, and authenticated, as those he admits.—Farther,

“ It is difficult, says Mr. Walpole, not to suspect that  
 “ our Historians have imagined more plotting in this  
 “ transaction than could easily be compassed in so short a  
 “ period, and in an age when no communication could be  
 “ carried on but by special messengers, in bad roads,  
 “ and with no relays of post-horses.” He then tells us,  
 that “ Edward the Fourth died April the 9th, and his  
 “ son made his entrance into London May the Fourth.  
 “ It is not probable, says he, that the Queen commu-  
 “ nicated her directions for bringing up her son with an  
 “ armed force to the Lords of the Council, and her  
 “ newly-reconciled enemies. But she might be betrayed.  
 “ Still it required some time for Buckingham to send his  
 “ servant Percival to York, where the Duke of Gloucester  
 “ then lay; for Percival's return (it must be observed  
 “ too that the Duke of Buckingham was in Wales, con-

<sup>c</sup> p. 23.

“ frequently

“ frequently did not learn the Queen’s orders on the spot,  
 “ but either received the account from London or Lud-  
 “ low); for the two Dukes to send instructions to their  
 “ confederates in London; for the impression to be made  
 “ on the Queen, and for her dispatching her counter-  
 “ orders for Percival to post back and meet Gloucester  
 “ at Nottingham, and for returning thence and bringing  
 “ his master Buckingham to meet Richard at Northamp-  
 “ ton, at the very time of the King’s arrival there. All  
 “ this might happen, continues Mr. Walpole, and yet  
 “ who will believe, that such mysterious and rapid nego-  
 “ ciations came to the knowledge of Sir Thomas More,  
 “ twenty-five years afterwards, when, as it will appear,  
 “ he knew nothing of very material and public facts that  
 “ happened at the same period?”

Be all this as it will; whether the Queen communicated  
 her mind to the Lords of the council and her newly-  
 reconciled enemies, or not; or whether she was betrayed;  
 whether it was possible or impossible for so much ground  
 to be travelled over in the space of about four weeks; in  
 short, whether it is credible or incredible that these  
 weighty matters should come to the knowledge of Sir  
 Thomas More twenty-five years afterward; this is cer-  
 tain, and Mr. Walpole himself expects it to be granted  
 him, that



*"The preparation of an armed force, under Earl Rivers,  
 " &c. &c. gave occasion to the Princes to imprison the  
 " relations of the Queen." &c. &c.*

It follows, therefore, that the Queen's preparations were made after the death of Edward the Fourth came to the knowledge of the two Dukes; that they plotted together; got to Northampton to intercept the King; made Earl Rivers, Lord Richard Grey, Sir Thomas Vaughan, and Sir Richard Hawte, prisoners; sent them to Pomfret, and conducted the King to London, all between the 9th of April and 4th of May.

If Mr. Walpole denies this, he contradicts his own arguments.

And now, I beg leave to ask, what mighty progress is made towards clearing Richard of any designs upon the crown, or of the murder of his nephews, by asserting, that he resisted the Queen's preparations; took her son, an infant King, into his own custody; and imprisoned and put to death (according to the barbarous custom of those times, without trial) her relations, who dared to check his ambitious projects?

I will allow, that he acted as most Princes would have done in his situation, in a lawless and barbarous age. For at that time, most Princes were not many degrees better than Richard, and would stick at no crimes, ever so horrible and inhuman, to gain their ends. But a virtuous, good Prince, would not have acted so.---The Queen could have no views in the measures she took, but to secure to herself the guardianship of her son; (not contrary to the laws of the realm; for Mr. Walpole proves no law to have existed, and I recollect none, whereby a King's mother was expressly excluded a share in the government during the minority of her son) and to prevent his falling into the custody of an uncle, of whom she had divers mistrusts. Had Richard therefore been biassed by the interest of the state, a regard to the public tranquillity, a respect to the memory of his brother, and his duty to his sovereign, he would have endeavoured to remove the Queen's mistrusts and jealousies, by a friendly, courteous, and brotherly behaviour, offering his service and advice in such great exigencies, fostering at the same time an honest, upright spirit, to stand forth the protector of his nephew and King, the vindicator of the laws and constitution, in case she had exercised the power she assumed, to the prejudice of the former, or the destruction of the latter.

4. "That the execution of Lord Hastings, who had first engaged with Richard against the Queen, and whom Sir Thomas More confesses Richard was lothe to lose, can be accounted for by nothing but absolute necessity, and the law of self-defence."

I don't see why we may not just as well suppose it was out of revenge, indignation, to strike terror, and for an example to those who might be inclined to quit his party. But I will not stand upon punctilio's with Mr. Walpole concerning this point. It was certainly no more than was to be expected from Richard, or any Prince whose cause was better. A man who is fighting for a crown would do very wrong to spare the lives of such as revolted from his party, and added to the number of his opponents.

5. "That Richard's assumption of the protectorate was, in every respect, agreeable to the laws and usage; was probably bestowed on him by the universal consent of the council and peers, and was a strong indication that he had then no thought of questioning the right of his nephew."

I confess myself so dull that I cannot comprehend to what laws and usage Richard's assumption of the protectorate



torate was so agreeable. To the same laws and usage which invested Isabella with the government, upon the deposition of her husband; "an usurped power, as Mr. Walpole terms it; the same power which had contri-  
 buted to dethrone her husband; a power sanctified by  
 no title, and confirmed by no act of parliament?"---To the same laws and usage which raised the Duke of Lancaster to the protectorate during the minority of Richard the Second, at a time when the nation was in a panic lest he should make out a claim to the crown, involve the kingdom in a civil war, and when there was none but a mother we hardly hear of, a very woman, to stand by the young King? With regard to Isabella's usurpation, it is plain it was resisted, but not without a sanction of parliament, which appointed not *one* protector, but twelve guardians to the King.

Richard's protectorate was only *probably* bestowed on him by the universal consent of the council and peers, and *probably*, I say, not till after Richard had himself assumed it. Mr. Walpole declares, "In  
 what manner Richard assumed, or was invested  
 with the protectorate, does not appear." Yet because Sir Thomas More, (whose evidence is now ad-

\* See Mr. Walpole's own note, p. 22.

mitted as to the purpose) speaking of him by that title, says, *The protector, which always you must take for the Duke of Gloucester*; and Fabian, after mentioning the solemn arrival of the King in London, adds, *Then provision was made for the King's coronation, in which pastime the Duke, being admitted for Lord Protector*; Mr. Walpole concludes, "as the parliament was not sitting, "this dignity was no doubt conferred upon him by the "Lords and Privy Council, as we hear no opposition "made."—I will grant this so far, that Richard, having of his own accord assumed the protectorate, secured the chiefs of the Queen's friends, and got the King himself in his custody, it might not have been difficult to obtain a ratification of his proceedings from an house of Lords, and a privy-council, composed perhaps for the most part of his own creatures and friends. We have been told before, that the reconciliation betwixt the Queen's kindred and the great Lords of the court was only patched up, and that the disgusted Lords only seemed to yield, to satisfy the dying King. We must suppose then there were enough, who thought they might gain their ends and make their fortunes better, by paying court to Richard, than to a woman and her kindred, whom they were already jealous of, and whose timidity had drove her into a sanctuary: there were enough, I say, of that stamp, to think it might answer their views best, if they suffered the

the Duke of Gloucester to assume the protectorate, by which he became in all respects King, except by name. It is possible, however, had they apprehended what this power would have carried him to, they had not been so easy as to have fallen in with his humour.—It does by no means follow, therefore, that this step “ was a strong “ indication that he had then no thought of questioning “ the right of his nephew.” It strikes me quite the reverse. It was paving a way to his ultimate designs, and by this means, as well as the farce of his nephew’s coronation, only avoiding to give the nation too great a shock at once. People’s pulses were first to be felt. And for this purpose, we are told, that when the two Dukes, Gloucester and Buckingham, were bringing up the King (a prisoner) to his coronation, Hastings came on before, and endeavoured to prepare and pacify the people, who began to have strange apprehensions I suppose, acquainting them, “ that the arrested Lords had been imprisoned “ for plotting against the Dukes.” Upon the whole, I think, I have proceeded, thus far at least, to shew clearly, that it is not only consistent with reason, but no proof has been brought to the contrary, to suppose that Richard has hitherto had nothing more earnestly in his head than to possess himself of the crown at any rate; and, from the character already apparent to us, we cannot imagine he would stick at any thing to gain his point. All the



schemes and plots laid to his charge, all his imputed finesses, seem so very likely and probable, and indicate so plainly his drifts and intentions, that it surprizes me not a little how they can be denied, or wrested to any favourable interpretations.

But Mr. Walpole goes on to prove,

6. “ *That the tale of Richard, aspersing the chastity of his own mother, is incredible ; it appearing that he lived with her in perfect harmony, and lodged with her in her palace at that very time.*”

After what has already been said to detect the black heart, which Mr. Walpole has attempted to cover with so fair a veil, it is easy to imagine Richard capable of any thing. I do not know otherwise how to dispute this matter with him, as Historians, it seems, are not to be credited. But I must take notice that Mr. Walpole observes, that Sir Thomas More tells us, “ *Richard, meditating usurpation, divided the Lords into two separate councils, assembling the King's or Queen's party at Baynard's Castle, but holding his own private junto at Crosby Place. From the latter he began with spreading murmurs, whispers, and reports against the legality of the late King's marriage.*” — “ And thus far, says he, we may credit

“ credit him.—But what man of common sense can believe, that Richard went so far as publicly to asperse the honour of his own mother?” &c. Here we see that great man Sir Thomas More tells truth one moment, and propagates the most abominable lies the very next.

“ Is it, can it be credible, continues Mr. Walpole, that Richard actuated a venal preacher to declare to the people from the pulpit at Paul’s Cross, that his mother had been an adulteress, and that her two sons Edward the Fourth and the Duke of Clarence were spurious ; and that the good lady had not given a legitimate child to her husband, but the Protector, and, I suppose, the Duchess of Suffolk,” &c.

As I have said before, and I hope by this time my readers are of my opinion, I cannot think Richard incapable of any the basest action. Nor indeed can his outward deportment to his mother, his dutiful letter quoted in Mr. Walpole’s note, and his living in her palace, persuade me to my satisfaction, that he was no prevaricator, and that he had no clandestine dealings with the preacher at Paul’s Cross.—In short, it is as possible and probable, that Richard had recourse to this dirty, underhand piece of craft, as that he afterwards publicly bastardized his nephew, whom he had acknowledged King, had suffered to be

crowned, and to whom he had constituted himself guardian and protector. It seems to me likewise as credible,

7. *That Richard gained the crown by a sermon of Dr. Shaw, and a speech of the Duke of Buckingham, though the people only laughed at those orators.*

I had rather call it, if Mr. Walpole pleases, *took possession of the crown*; for Richard may, if I am not mistaken, be said more properly to have *gained the crown* by his foregoing stratagems, plots, and force. But when he had got to the very step of the throne, when he had perfectly cleared away his greatest obstructions, there was yet remaining a sort of farce or prelude to be acted before he could actually seat himself and take possession. He had gained over the Lords and Grandees, (no difficult matter, seeing the youth of Edward the Fifth, and the jealousy occasioned by the Queen and her family,) and now it seemed necessary to obtain the voluntary consent of the commonalty. To this purpose it was absolutely necessary there should be some apology made for his whole conduct, and that there should be at least some endeavour to satisfy the people he was no usurper, but took the crown under some legal and just pretences. This was undertaken by Dr. Shaw and the Duke of Buckingham; and



and though Mr. Walpole treats Sir Thomas More's account of their Oratory displayed upon this occasion as a mere romance, it is certain all modern authors have given credit to it, and are very particular as to every circumstance. Fabian too seems to have taken notice of it, from what hint Mr. Walpole gives us. In short, I see nothing absurd, nothing improbable, in supposing Shaw and Buckingham set to work *pour annoncer* that Richard was ready to take the crown, if he could but be in a manner invited to it. <sup>1</sup>

Another trick of Richard's, upon which indeed the sermon of Dr. Shaw, and the harangue of the Duke of

“ Le Pere d'Orleans, whose authority might possibly be exclaim'd against, were it produced relative to any thing during the reign of the Stuarts, being however neither Yorkist nor Lancastrian, makes the same reflections with me. “ Le Protecteur, says he, vit bien qu'en effet il n'y avoit plus de tems a perdre, et que l'affaire etant venue au point de sa maturité, on la gâtoit en la retardant. Sur cette necessité, ayant pris sa dernière resolution, il prit ses mesures, il donna ses ordres, et disposa ses satellites pour les sanglantes executions, qui devoient lui frayer le chemin au trône. Il fut si bien servi, qu'en même tems on mit a mort les prisonniers qu'il faisoit garder a Pomfret, et on coupa dans la tour de Londres la tête au grand chambellan Hastings. Il fit arreter l'archeveque de York, l'evêque d'Ely, & Thomas Stanley, et jetta tant de terreur dans tous les esprits, que personne n'osa rien tenter pour s'opposer a ses cruautés. Il vit bien qu'il ne trouveroit gueres plus d'obstacles a son ambition, et qu'il ne tenoit qu'a lui de se faire proclamer Roi : mais il ne crut pas cet evenement encore assez bien préparé. Malgré tant d'actions violentes, qui le faisoient regarder comme un tyran, il avoit la delicateffe de ne pas vouloir passer pour un usurpateur, et il poussa la chose si loin, qu'il voulut paroître forcé a accepter une couronne, qu'il envahissoit par tant d'attentats.”

*Revol. d'Angl. Liv. 7.*

Buck-

Buckingham, were framed, was to palliate his taking the crown from his nephews, by making it believed,

8. *That there had been a pre-contract, or marriage, between Edward the Fourth and Lady Eleanor Talbot ; and that his claim to the crown was founded on the illegitimacy of Edward's children.*

And this Mr. Walpole thinks he has, some way or other, demonstrated. I must humbly beg leave to think otherwise. Neither his reasoning, nor the testimony of the authors he quotes, evince to any certainty, that there actually was any pre-contract. Not finding sufficient for his purpose in our own historians, he has recourse to a foreigner. *Honest Philip de Comines* informs us, " That the Bishop of Bath informed Richard, that he had married King Edward to an English lady." Mr. Walpole confesses in the note, <sup>b</sup> " that Comines insinuates the Bishop acted out of revenge for having been imprisoned by Edward ; and adds, " It might be so ; but as Comines had before alledged, that the Bishop had actually said he had married them, it *might* be the truth that the prelate told out of revenge, and not a lie : nor is it probable that his tale would have had any weight if false, and unsupported by other circumstances." — Men

of great abilities and exalted genius think there is no difficulty in imposing upon the understanding of other people : it is their amusement ; and sometimes they will do so from a notion that all the world are fools besides themselves ; else how can Mr. Walpole draw such absurd conclusions, and beg the question, where common sense cannot allow it ? I do not find but Comines (for luckily I have that author) insinuates, in both the places where he mentions this transaction, that there was rather malice and revenge in the Bishop : and as to his observation, “ that it *might be* the truth which the prelate told out of “ revenge, and not a lie ; ” I beg leave to say, it *might be* a lie, and not the truth. I hope my *might be* is as good as Mr. Walpole’s, and follows as naturally from the question. But let us see Philip de Comines’s own words : “ Le Roy Edouard laissa a sa femme deux beaux fils : “ l’un appelé le Prince de Galles, l’autre le Duc d’Yorth, “ & deux filles ; le Duc de Glocestre, son frere, prit le “ gouvernement de son neveu le Prince de Galles, lequel “ pouvoit avoir dix ans, & luy fit hommage, comme a “ son Roy et l’emmena a Londres, feignant le vouloir “ couronner, pour tirer l’autre fils de la franchise de “ Londres, ou il restoit avec sa mere, qui avoit quelque “ suspicion. Fin de compte, par le moyen d’un Evesque “ de Bath, (lequel avoit été autrefois conseiller du Roy “ Edouard, puis le desappointa, et le tint en prison et prit  
“ argent



“ argent de sa delivrance) il fit l'exploict dont vous orrez  
 “ tantost parler. Celluy Eveque mit en avant a ce Duc  
 “ de Glocestre, que le dit Roy Edouard estant fort amour-  
 “ eux d'une dame d'Angleterre luy promit de l'espouser,  
 “ pourveu qu'il couchast avec elle : ce qu'elle consentit,  
 “ et dit cet Evesque qu'il les avoit espousez, et n'y avoit  
 “ que luy et eux deux : il estoit homme de cour, et ne  
 “ le decouvrit pas, et aida a faire taire la dame, et de-  
 “ meura ainsi cette chose : ” — “ a cet heure dont je  
 “ parle, cet Evesque de Bath decouvrit cette matiere a ce  
 “ Duc de Glocestre, dont il luy aida bien a executer son  
 “ mauvais vouloir.” In short this affair, which the  
 good Bishop of Bath had so long kept a secret, he disco-  
 vered at last, to furnish Richard with pretexts to claim  
 the crown, and put his wicked designs in execution.  
 Such an infamous Bishop, in my humble opinion, was  
 more like to tell a lye, than discover a truth, to serve his

\* Comines says afterwards in the sixth book, — “ Et en plain parlement d'An-  
 “ gleterre fit degrader deux filles dudit Roi Edouard, et declarer bastardes, sous  
 “ couleur de quelque cas qu'il prouva par un Evesque de Bath en Angleterre,  
 “ qui autrefois avoit eu grand credit avec le dit Roi Edouard et puis le desappointa  
 “ et tint en prison, et le rançonna d'une somme d'argent, lequel Eveque disoit  
 “ que le dit Roi Edouard avoit promis foy de mariage a une dame d'Angleterre,  
 “ qu'il nommoit pour ce qu'il en estoit amoureux, pour en avoir son plaisir et en  
 “ avoit la promesse entre les mains du dit Evesque, et sur cette promesse coucha  
 “ avec elle, et ne le faisoit que pour la tromper : toutefois tels jeux sont bien dan-  
 “ gereux, temoins telles enseignes. J'ay veu beaucoup de Gens de Cour, qui  
 “ n'eussent point perdu une adventure, qui leur eut plu en tel cas, par faute de  
 “ promettre.”

abominable purposes.—Amongst our own historians, Mr. Walpole, signifying the highest contempt for every thing related by Sir Thomas More, pays the greatest deference to Buck, whose integrity, he says, will more and more appear, and who affirms, “That before Edward had espoused the Lady Grey, he had been contracted to the Lady Eleanor Butler, and married to her by the Bishop of Bath.” This author of such great integrity, is represented to us by Mr. Walpole, some pages before, in this manner: “Buck, *so long exploded* as a lover of paradoxes, and as an advocate for a monster, gains new credit the deeper this dark scene is fathomed. *Undoubtedly Buck has gone too far.*”—It seems pretty clear, therefore, that this writer has never obtained much credit, or been considered of any weight, till Mr. Walpole has thought proper to bring him into reputation; and though “undoubtedly he has gone too far,” (in vindicating Richard, I suppose,) it is only where he does not always play into Mr. Walpole’s hands; for instance, where, “in his vindication of Richard, he does but authenticate his crimes.” His mention of the pre-contract and marriage of Edward the Fourth to Lady Eleanor Butler just suited Mr. Walpole.—But I beg leave to ask, how came Buck to know of this pre-contract and marriage, which

<sup>d</sup> P. 40.

<sup>e</sup> p. 20.

had been kept secret so long, and to which there were no witnesses but the Bishop of Bath, if he can be considered as a competent witness? It must have been first published by the Bishop himself, as Comines intimates; so that Buck tells us nothing but what came from this good-for-nothing prelate; who, to pay his court to Richard, by whom he might probably be rewarded with an archiepiscopal mitre, discovered what it was in nobody's power to contradict; "et dit cet Eveſque qu'il les avoit espouſes, "et que n'y avoit que luy et eux deux;" *And this Bishop ſaid that he had married them, and there was only he and they two.*

However, here is the Chronicle of Croyland, and a roll of parliament, both confirm the truth of this marriage. Let us ſee what they ſay. The firſt takes notice, that "Color introitus, et captæ poſſeſſionis hujusmodi is "erat. Oſtendabatur per modum ſupplicationis in quodam rotulo pergameni quod filii regis Edwardi erant "baſtardi, ſupponendo illum precontraxiſſe cum quâdam "domina Alienorâ Boteler, antequam reginam Elizabeth "duxiffet uxorem." The Engliſh to which, if I miſtake not much, is this: *There was this colour for his intrusion and taking poſſeſſion (of the crown). It was made appear in the form of a ſupplication, in a certain roll of parchment,*

† Philip de Comines, livre 5.

*that*



*that the sons of King Edward were bastards, by supposing he was pre-contracted to a certain lady, Eleanor Boteler (or Butler) before he had married Queen Elizabeth. I cannot find here any thing positive is asserted : so far from it, the Chronicle calls it only Color introitus & captæ possessionis ; and the bastardy of Edward's children was made out by "supposing he had been pre-contracted, &c." I conceive therefore, the author of the Chronicle was conscious this was all a trick of Richard's ; and accordingly his expression, that it was a colour for his intrusion and taking possession, denotes as much.*

The other voucher, the roll of parliament,<sup>s</sup> which is at length come to light, proves as little. It sets forth, "That though the three estates which petitioned Richard to assume the crown were not assembled in form of parliament," (*and therefore it was no roll of parliament*), yet rehearsing the supplication, (as recorded above by the Chronicle) it declares, "that King Edward was, and stood married and troth plight to one dame Eleanor Butler, daughter to the Earl of Shrewsbury, with whom the said King Edward had made a pre-contract of matrimony, long before he made his pretended marriage with Elizabeth Grey." All we can conclude from hence is, that Richard having gained

<sup>s</sup> Page 43.

a great number of Lords and others, through fear, hopes, and particular views, to come into his measures; these, though no actual parliament, had dared to declare the monarch, whom they had acknowledged as their lawful King, and whom Richard himself had paid homage to, a bastard. Nor does it appear that this was thought of, or known, till such time as Richard determined to have the crown: and these *three estates, not assembled in form of parliament*, could have proceeded only in this, upon the intelligence of the Bishop of Bath. This was perhaps what that author of integrity, Mr. Buck, would call *policy*; and it is not impossible, were we to consult him, he would be found to mention this pre-contract and marriage as a piece of *policy*; in which light there is strong reason to consider it: and now let us proceed to the next article attempted to be proved:

9. *That a convention of the nobility, clergy, and people, invited Richard to accept the crown on that title, viz. the illegitimacy of his nephews.*

This was a convention of the three estates not assembled in the form of parliament. I do not mean to sneer at this kind of convention in general, to which I am sensible is owing the ratification of the happiest revolution that ever was in England; but at a time when a Prince

of

of the blood-royal had acknowledged his nephew King, and by reason of his minority had assumed to himself the protectorate, it appears strange that he should knock o' the head all who opposed this dignity of his, bastardize his brother's children, and then get himself invited to accept the crown, by a convention of three estates not assembled in the form of parliament. Would one not rather suppose it was a junto, and a convention of the greatest villains that ever existed?—But I hope Mr. Walpole will allow, that even a parliament conferring a crown alters not a *Right*; for when Henry of Lancaster was by parliament invested with the crown, there was an Earl of March who had a better right, and which was afterwards asserted by the house of York.

Again Mr. Walpole proceeds to shew,

\* It is remarkable that Mr. Walpole picks and chuses from Historians only as it may answer his purpose, though ever so weakly; and then he puts what sense or interpretations he pleases upon his authorities. Here, upon the subject of Richard's being invited to accept the regal dignity, he says, "that he was invited to this " by the three estates, is confirmed by the Chronicle of Croyland, which says, *that Richard, having brought together a great force from the North, from Wales, and other parts, did, on the 26th of June, claim the crown,* "*seque eodem die apud magnam aulam Westmonasterii in cathedram marmoriam ibi intravit.*"—I cannot make it out that this was an invitation by the three estates. But he then appeals to Sir Thomas More, who so seldom can please him, to prove, "that these forces " were only 5000 men, evil apparelled, and ill harnessed in rusty harness, " neither defensible nor scoured to the sale, which mustered in Finsbury field, to " the great disdain of all lookers on." p. 44.

10. That



10. *That nothing can be more improbable than Richard's having taken no measures before he left London to have his nephews murdered, if he had had any such intention.*

A man in Richard's situation must naturally be distracted, confused, wavering in his resolutions, and always upon the balance. It is therefore not in the least improbable, I think, that he had thoughts of murdering his nephews before he left London, but postponed the execution till he returned. Yet even upon the road he might consider the matter more maturely, and think it safest to have them out of the way, apprehensive lest some disturbance might happen during his absence. Or we will suppose, on the other hand, that he had no intention of murdering the princes, before he left London; might not such a thought have suggested itself to so black a fellow, whilst he was in his way to Gloucester? Can we imagine likewise that his usurpation, the confinement of the Princes in the Tower, (which, even considering it in the light of a *Royal Palace*<sup>b</sup>, they were not suffered to stir out of, that we know) the executions of their friends, and all that related to this horrid plot, were not topics of conversation between Richard and his court; and can we imagine the danger of leaving Edward the Fifth and his

<sup>b</sup> See p. 36.

brother alive, might not have occurred suddenly to some bosom counsellor, who might have advised Richard to dispatch orders, without loss of time, for perpetrating this fact, and securing every thing? But we will consider the circumstances more minutely; and here Mr. Walpole insists,

11. *That the story of Sir James Tirrel, as related by Sir Thomas More, is a notorious falshood; Sir James Tirrel being at that time Master of the Horse, in which capacity he had walked at Richard's coronation.*

12. *That Tirrel's jealousy of Sir Richard Ratchiffe is another palpable falshood; Tirrel being already preferred, and Ratchiffe absent.*

If Mr. Walpole can be found to have sufficiently and incontestably proved, that Sir James Tirrel walked at the coronation of Richard the Third, as Master of the Horse, we must e'en agree with him that Sir Thomas More's story of Sir James is a notorious falshood. But I cannot see that this is at any rate clearly demonstrated. I am not in the way of getting a sight of this curious, invaluable monument, Richard's coronation-roll; yet I suppose Mr. Walpole has been so accurate in his perusal, and the use he makes of it, as to reap all the advantage he can.

Never-

Nevertheless, it appears to me, from this gentleman's account of it, that it was begun, according to the date, from the death of Edward the Fourth, and continued on to the feast of the Purification in the February following; that is, above three months before, and almost seven months after the coronation; and was an account of Peter Curtys, keeper of the Great Wardrobe, where he specifies "what stuff he found in the Wardrobe, what contracts he made for the ensuing coronation, and the deliveries in consequence." Ay? Is that really so? Are no deliveries entered on this roll, dated so long before the coronation, and continued so long after, but what are in *consequence* of, and for the purport of the coronation? Perhaps, if Mr. Walpole would consult this roll again, he may find that, for any thing appearing to the contrary, these parcels of stuff were delivered to Sir James Tirrel long after the coronation, after the murder of the two Princes, and that, as he might have been knighted, so he might have been appointed Master of the Horse, as a reward for the wicked service he had done his King and Master. And I may here take this opportunity of answering, by the by, another problem, supposed to be demonstrated by this roll, viz.

*That Richard made, or intended to make his nephew, Edward the Fifth, walk at his coronation.*

Because



Because it is there entered "To Lord Edward, Son of  
 " late King Edward the Fourth, for his apparel and array,  
 " that is to say, a short gowne, made of two yards and  
 " three quarters of crymsy clothe of gold, lyned with  
 " two yards  $\frac{3}{4}$  black velvet; a large gowne, made of six  
 " yards  $\bar{D}$  of crymsyn clothe of gold, lyned with six  
 " yards of green damask; a short gowne, made of two  
 " yards  $\frac{3}{4}$  of purpell velvet, lyned with two yards  $\frac{3}{4}$  of  
 " green damask; a doublett and a stomacher, made of  
 " two yards of black fattyn," &c. Besides which, adds  
 Mr. Walpole, there were "two foot cloths, a bonet of  
 " purpell velvet, nine horse harness, and nine saddle  
 " houses (houfings) of blue velvet, gilt spurs, with many  
 " other rich articles and magnificent apparel for his Hench-  
 " men and pages."—I confess, for my part, I wonder  
 what the poor little fellow did, if he really walked, with  
 such a load of cloaths upon his back, in the middle of  
 summer; two short gowns, one of cloth of gold, lyned  
 with black velvet, the other of purpell velvet, lined with  
 green damask, a long gown of cloth of gold, lined with  
 green damask, (a curious robe, to be sure, for a deposed  
 King), a doublett and a stomacher of black fattin!  
 Might not Richard think, by loading the poor child in  
 this manner, that he might occasion his death the sooner,  
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 nistry? But what could induce Richard to make, or

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intend



intend to make, his deposed nephew walk at his coronation? Whatever interpretation Mr. Walpole may please to give this, surely it is widely different from any that would naturally suggest itself to any man, who was not inclined to force a point. It can appear nothing but a cruel insult upon the young monarch, who, instead of being the principal character in the solemnity, was obliged, like a captive King in a Roman triumph, to walk dressed out like a fool, and grace his uncle's coronation. I am sorry Mr. Walpole could not see this circumstance would turn more to his hero's disadvantage than to his honour. I am willing therefore, I own, to suppose these robes, magnificences, and trappings, were rather furnished and prepared sooner, some perhaps for the young King's constant wear, some for his own coronation\*, which, no doubt, was expected when he arrived in town May the 4th, a time of year when fatten doublets and stomachers, velvet linings, and cloth of gold short coats, might be more tolerable than in the middle of July.

I hope Mr. Walpole will not insist upon it, if this roll contained only "the contracts Mr. Curtys made for the coronation of Richard, and the deliveries in consequence," that the entry of *the long pillows of fustian, and pillow biers of Holland cloth, for the sick Lady Brydget,*

\* Vide post, and Sir Thomas's More's account of Richard's coronation.

had any thing to do with the coronation : possibly, indeed, poor Lady Biddy had been hardly used, as well as her brothers ; had lain a-bed without a pillow to prop up her head, and upon the day of the coronation she was indulged in this little piece of luxurious furniture. But to return to Sir James Tirrel ; as I cannot comprehend it is quite plain that the stuffs entered in Mr. Curtys's roll for this Knight and Master of the Horse, were to fit him out for strutting in his Master's coronation procession, and of course think it not improbable that he might have been furnished with these things afterwards, when, in consequence of his obedience to his Master's horrible commands, he was rewarded with an honour and great post ; so Mr. Walpole's next position, " that Tirrel's jealousy of Sir " Richard Ratcliffe is a palpable falshood told by Sir " Thomas More, because Tirrel was already preferred," falls for the most part to the ground ; for we have no reason to think that Tirrel was already preferred : and to Ratcliffe's being absent, I shall say a word by and by.

Thus much however I will seem to agree with Mr. Walpole, that the story of Sir James Tirrel, as related by Sir Thomas More, if it is not a notorious falshood, (as we have shewn Mr. Walpole's reasons scarcely prove it to be) is nevertheless a somewhat puzzling story. Yet let us consider it, and see whether we cannot make it as con-

sistent, as he has endeavoured to make it inconsistent with probability.

I must premise this, that many events and transactions which have passed nearer to, and even in our own time, have been so singular and unaccountable in certain concomitant circumstances, that we might almost call them in question, had we not the word of our own parents for them, or the testimony of our own eyes and ears. Should, by means of some metempsychosis, a Mr. Walpole exist 285 years hence, *cui eadem mens, idem animus*, what would he think of a Mrs. Brownrigge, a woman of the fairest reputation, respected and even liked by all of her degree that knew her; a woman of a profession in which she had always shewn the greatest care, tenderness, and humanity; that such a woman should have been hanged for the most horrid cruelty and barbarity, for beating, cutting, and flaying a poor innocent young girl till she died of her wounds, without the least provocation, without any apparent cause, view, or purport? He would most certainly think such a story false, declare that the Annual Register for the year 1767 was full of lies, fables, and paradoxes; and that some Chronicler of these times, who may yet publish the reign of George the Third, wrote to amuse his leisure and exercise his fancy.—And what does Mr. Walpole think of facts which his or my grandfather could

have



have told us from their own knowledge, besides what we have the testimony of very respectable Historians for; viz. that multitudes lost their lives upon the scaffold and at the gallows for plots in Charles the Second's reign, which were and are doubted ever to have existed; at least, which were proved not without much perjury pro and con: I mean the Popish plot, pretended to be discovered by Titus Oates, and the Rye-House plot?—I could introduce here numberless other relations, drawn from history, given us by credible authors, and founded upon absolute facts, which nevertheless, by Mr. Walpole's method of reasoning, would be soon represented as ridiculous and inconsistent with probability.

But let us now see this story of Sir Thomas More about Sir James Tirrel, and the manner in which the murder of Edward the Fifth and the Duke of York was perpetrated.

Richard, before he left London, having taken no measures to accomplish the assassination, on the road, says Sir Thomas, “his mind misgave him, that while his nephews lived, he should not possess the crown with security. Upon this reflection, he dispatched one John Greene to Sir Robert Brackenbury, Lieutenant of the Tower, with a letter and credence also, that the said Sir

“ Robert,

“Robert, in any wise, should put the two children to death.”

Thus far I see nothing in the story which can in any wise shock common sense. Richard seems to have conducted himself as I should suppose any other man in the like circumstances would. He had taken no measures before he left London to accomplish the assassination; the thought struck him, or it was suggested to him by some wicked counsellor on the road. We have, I hope, before shewn, it is not improbable nor unreasonable that this might be. His business was now therefore to employ some trusty fellow, who would not betray him, to go up to town and get this business done for him. Greene, it must be supposed, answered the purpose; and it must be imagined that Richard knew him well, or was particularly recommended to him, as a fit person to carry a letter up to town upon this tragical subject. I hope Mr. Walpole will allow that there is nothing improbable in such a fellow being to be found, who would execute such a commission; from his extensive knowledge of history, he must be sensible that many such tools have been employed upon these sort of occasions; and he must agree likewise, that plots, as black as this, have been trusted to paper by as wise plotters as Richard. Providence indeed, to serve its wiser ends, has frequently used these means to discover wicked

wicked men ; and thus the powder-plot in James the First's reign, being committed to a letter, was discovered ; yet it has happened, that, for ends we cannot comprehend or dive into, things of this nature are let to take their course.—Green therefore, although found a proper and trusty villain, could yet not be charged with the whole execution of his master's will ; for the Lieutenant of the Tower was to be passed through first, and could not by any means be left out of the secret. There is no doubt, but when Richard confined the two young Princes, he appointed a Lieutenant to the Tower who was perfectly devoted and faithful to him. Such a man then he could have no fear to trust with a secret of this importance, and such a man it was necessary to admit as an accomplice, from the nature of his office. To him therefore, from whose known fidelity there could be no dangerous apprehensions, a letter was dispatched by the hands of Green, a knave of equal worth and confidence.

Let us go on now a little further with Sir Thomas More's account.

This John Green did his errand to Brackenbury, kneeling before our Lady in the Tower, who plainly answered, that he never would put them to death, *to dye therefore.*



I do not know whether Mr. Walpole will assent to my idea, that a man may be a villain only to a certain degree. A man, in my humble opinion, may be a very bad man, but there is a something, a *je ne sçai quoi* within him, that pulls him back, and will not permit him to pass certain limits. Brackenbury might have been King Richard's humble servant in any thing but a shocking, inhuman murder : he was a man of some religion, we find, for he was kneeling before our Lady in the Tower, when Green delivered to him the dispatches from the King ; and to a person thus employed, a proposal or command of that sort, as was contained in the letter, was still more shocking. Perhaps, had Green found Brackenbury at his bottle, instead of his devotions, he had made less scruples. However, it is very just and agreeable with reason to suppose, that a man, who had found his interest in attaching himself to Richard, perhaps likewise deluded by the fiction of the illegitimacy of Edward's children, to which he saw so large a body of the nation give sanction, would keep the most watchful guard upon his royal prisoners, by whose escape he might himself be a sufferer, and yet would on no account imbrue his hands in the blood of those innocent babes. But it is not impossible I have too good an opinion of Sir Robert Brackenbury ; for what is the sense of his answer, " That he never would put them to death, " to die therefore ? " the meaning of which, if I understand

stand it, I conceive to be, that he never would put them to death, to have his own head chopped off afterwards for that deed; intimating hereby, as if he was not altogether ignorant of the dirty deceitful mind of King Richard, who, having used the stool, would kick it from under him, and might afterwards, to clear himself to the world from any imputation of this murder, bring Brackenbury to the block for it. Princes in general, especially such as are cursed with the principles of a Richard, are the most ungrateful beings in the world; and it is an old and true maxim, that they *love the treason, but hate the traitor*. Mr. Walpole, I dare say, has met with many instances of this in the course of his historical studies.—It is not impossible likewise, that Brackenbury, however faithful to his master, being of a sagacious mind, began already to foresee what turn things would take; at least, perceived they could not last long. The conspiracy of Buckingham and the Bishop of Ely was not long after this, and might very possibly have been brewing before, though historians take no notice of it till after this event. Sir Robert therefore was to be a little cautious how he behaved himself in his office under King Richard; for though another Prince might have taken but little notice of his having been Lieutenant of the Tower, and keeping an hereditary King and his brother prisoners there by virtue of his office,

office, yet he might have lost his head probably if he had murdered them. Upon this answer then of Brackenbury, reported to Richard by the Messenger Green, what is the next step taken? Sir Thomas More farther tells us, "That the King took such displeasure and thought, that the same night he said unto a *secret* page of his, *Ah!* *whom shall a man trust? They that I have brought up myself, they that I thought would have most surely served me, even those faile me, and at my commandment will do nothing for me.*"

There is nothing in the world can be more natural than this speech. What can be devised that could have come more of course from the mouth of a man in Richard's situation, than the above words? He was so sure of Brackenbury's fidelity, that he is amazed and astonished to find him backward in the execution of this commission. And here we find, what in some measure explains the outset of this proceeding, that Brackenbury had been brought up by Richard himself; probably had been tutored and thoroughly seasoned in all the principles of that wicked Prince, as far as a better nature was susceptible of them. It is past wonder therefore, that Richard should so little hesitate to trust him with a secret of such importance. But being disappointed in this first step, what was to be done next? Was Richard to stop  
 5 here?



here? Was he not to prosecute his undertaking? He would have been a pusillanimous, cowardly villain indeed, if he had now wanted resolution to go on with what he had begun. Another hand, however, was to be beat about for, that might do this job: yet where was he to find it? He did not know who to trust now, after his disappointment in Brackenbury. His *secret* page, who from this epithet given him by Sir Thomas More, as well as from Richard's speech to him, we must suppose a person of the proper kidney, and who might strictly be confided in, begs leave to recommend one fit for the horrible commission. "Sir, quoth he, there lieth one in  
 " the palet chamber without, that I dare say will do  
 " your Grace's pleasure; the thing were right hard that  
 " he would refuse."—This, it seems, was James Tirrel, whom, Sir Thomas says, "the King, as men say, *there*  
 " made a Knight. The man, continues he, had an high  
 " heart, and sore longed upwards, not rising yet so fast as  
 " he had hoped, being hindred and kept under by Sir  
 " Richard Ratcliffe and Sir William Catesby, who by se-  
 " cret drifts kept him out of all secret trust."

From this description Tirrel seems to be a very proper person for the purpose; and that he was the man employed, is as reasonable to suppose, in my humble opinion, as not. For Mr. Walpole's proofs that he could not be the man,

and that Sir Thomas More had related a notorious falsehood, because Tirrel must probably have been a Knight before this time, having walked Master of the Horse to the King at his coronation, and consequently was not in that needy, aspiring state, appear rather weakly supported by the authority of Mr. Curtys's roll, as we have before shewn; and I flatter myself we shall find Mr. Walpole's further arguments against the probability of Tirrel's being employed in this commission, to be as frivolous.

"Sir Thomas More's affirmation," continues Mr. Walpole, rests on the credibility of certain reporters, we do not know whom, but who we shall find were no credible reporters at all." Sir Thomas indeed does say, "And thus, as I have learned of them that much knew, and little cause had to lye."—But does it follow, that because he does not, from very special reasons for ought we know, tell us the names of his informers, they are not to be credited? Cannot Mr. Walpole conceive himself writing an history of some of these latter reigns, and asserting facts upon the information he had received from the most authentic hands, yet not at liberty to name his authors? And would it not be hard, that his assertions should therefore be called in question? In short, I cannot but think this method of argument Mr. Walpole

falls into, is taking the most unfair advantages of an author ; a meer *petitio principii* ; and this species of logic he has had recourse to almost throughout.

But he tells us expressly, “ They were no credible reporters at all.” Why ? Because their report does not hang well together. “ Sir James Tirrel, a man in no secret trust with the King, and kept down by Catesby and Ratcliffe, is recommended as a proper person by a “ *nameless* page.” King Richard, as I have before observed, was disappointed in the man in whom he was sure he could trust ; he was therefore at a loss who to trust, and applied himself (nor do I see the absurdity of it) to this *nameless*, or rather, as Sir Thomas calls him, *secret* page ; (for here again I see no need of *naming* the page ; and it might be improper ; possibly his name was never known ; <sup>b</sup>) a lad, or man, to whom Richard knew he could open himself with security ; and this page recommends a person fit for the purpose, from those very circumstances, that he was kept down by Catesby and Ratcliffe, and very probably had an envious ambition to get

<sup>b</sup> None can be supposed to know the name of the page, except Richard and Tirrel ; the former certainly had no business to publish it ; and Tirrel, upon his examination in Henry the Seventh's time, might have declared he was recommended to King Richard for this commission by a *secret* page, but might not have thought proper to tell his name ; may be too was not called upon for it.



the start of them as soon as possible. How? says Mr. Walpole: "In the first place, Richard was crowned at York (after this transaction) Sept. 8th.—Edward the Fourth had not been dead four months, and those very bustling and active: Tirrel must have been impatient indeed, if the page had had time to observe his discontent at a superior confidence of Ratcliffe and Catesby." Does Mr. Walpole live in a country like this, descended himself from a great minister, and connected, no doubt, with the highest personages, and appears not to know, that a man shall, even in these days, be invested with all the honours thought necessary to quiet his ambition; yet in two, three, or four months after, shall not be able to conceal his impatience of that station, and eagerness to get a step higher; then pouts, grumbles, and resigns? Tirrel, allowing for the short time his Master had been in possession of any power, and not despairing of being properly taken notice of in his turn, might have waited with great patience, had he not perceived, perhaps directly contrary to his hopes and expectations, that a preference, which there was no right to, was given to Catesby; and the confidence placed in Ratcliffe, (with whom he might have had some bickerings before this, for ought we know) by giving him the custody of such noble prisoners at Pontefract, whilst he (Tirrel) was forced to *lie in the Palet Chamber,*

*Chamber*,<sup>c</sup> might (for it is impossible to deny it at this distance of time) have been a very just cause of great envy and heart-burnings in James Tirrel.

I must confess therefore, I cannot see so great an absurdity in the story related by Sir Thomas More, as to suppose it a *notorious falsehood*; nor that it must be so, has Mr. Walpole in any shape demonstrated, but from his own conceits. So likewise, to pursue the story, does there seem to follow nothing but what one might naturally expect of course, viz. That the Lieutenant of the Tower was again to be passed through, as the necessary conduit to the young Prince; that Brackenbury, who had absolutely refused imbruing his hands in innocent blood, was therefore by some means or other to be deprived of his charge; and that matters were to be so contrived, as

<sup>c</sup> It is not improbable, (except Mr. Walpole will give us palpable proofs to the contrary) that Tirrel had some rank in the army: that he was bred to this profession seems likely, from his having been appointed afterwards, as Mr. Walpole observes from Hall, by Henry the Seventh, Captain of Guisnes. He might therefore likewise have been Equerry, or perhaps Aid-de-camp, to Richard the Third. Now Ratcliffe, by being sent to Pontefract to guard the state-prisoners, was possibly preferred to the rank of a Lieutenant-Colonel, if not a Colonel, or General Officer; a rank which Tirrel might have had equal pretensions to, if not better.— And if Mr. Walpole should ask, What? can we suppose an officer, Equerry, or Aid-de-camp, lay in the Palet-chamber, (or rather, as Sir Thomas expresses it, *the Palet* only, which signifies a portable little bed,) I know from good authority, that this is the usual way for the Aids-de-camp to take their rest at night, when they are waiting upon their Generals or Kings.

not to irritate him, and draw such repentment from him, as to provoke him to discover or prevent the horrid murder.<sup>d</sup> Sir Thomas More therefore goes on to inform us, That Tirrel accepted the commission, received warrant to authorize Brackenbury to deliver to him the keys of the Tower for one night; and having selected two other villains, called Miles Forrest, and John Dighton, the two latter smothered the innocent Princes in their beds, and they called Tirrel to be witness of the execution.

This seems to be the worst part of the story, and most perplexing, that Richard should dare to supersede Brackenbury, who declared himself averse to the commission of an horrid murder; and that Brackenbury should so quietly resign his office, or the keys of the Tower, to another, though for one night only, when it is most probable he was acquainted with, or could very easily guess at, the purport. Nevertheless, I am not without hope that we shall, even here, surmount the difficulties of this tale. We ought in general to consider, that this kind of relation would appear in a far less degree marvellous, were we informed of every minute circumstance attending them, which the writers of those days did not think worth while communicating to us, (because little might they have apprehended a *Thomas a Didymus*, two centuries after that,

<sup>d</sup> p. 52.



would have called their veracity and authority in question), or very possibly they might not have known themselves, being certain *arcana* which never passed the walls of the palace.—But to remove these objections, first let us go back a little, and recollect the speech Sir Robert Brackenbury made to Greene, “That he never would put them “to death, *to die therefore* ;”—it is not impossible then that this religious man, who was kneeling before our Lady, had no other scruple, as I have above hinted, than that he might *die therefore*, if he committed this horrible crime : that is, he might, after the deed done, have been dispatched out of the way by his own master, for whose service he had done it ; or, in case of a sudden revolution, which he might have had some scent of, by a succeeding master. But this scruple was cured, and he might have thought himself safe enough from any future danger on this head, if he only obeyed in what was not in his power to refuse his master, delivering up the keys to Tirrel.—Or, in the next place, may we not suppose, that in those days of extreme superstition and Popery, a man might have had too great a check of humanity, conscience, and even religion, to perpetrate such a deed himself ; yet, being a man, as Richard has in his own words expressed it, “brought up by him,” and of such fidelity and devotion to him, that he was thunder-struck to find he should fail him, he might have over-ruled his

conscience, in hopes of absolution, so as to permit another to serve his master in what he could not prevail on himself to do.—Granting either of these hypotheses, and they seem not void of probability, we have an answer to Mr. Walpole's note<sup>c</sup>, that in recompence for the fidelity he gave proofs of, as far as his principles would permit him, and “to prevent his disclosing what he “knew of the murder, Richard renewed to Sir Robert “Brackenbury, in March after, his patent of Lieutenant of the Tower, in a more ample manner than “that he had before;” and then can we likewise wonder that a man, however scrupulous and conscientious as to committing a murder with his own hands, who nevertheless suffers his duty and fidelity to his Master, and perhaps a consideration of his own interest, to get so far the upper hand, as not to prevent or impede his service, will adhere to such master, when his crown and power to reward his faithful servants were at stake, and that he will lose his life in such master's cause? Or can we suppose that a man, who “would not put the “Princes to death to die *therefore*,” would quit his master's service and join the Earl of Richmond, to die *therefore*, if Richard got the day? Whereas, happen as it did, had Sir Robert survived the battle of Bosworth, he might with good reason have pleaded the necessity he was under to

<sup>c</sup> p. 53.

fight, as being in the service of Richard, and so come in under the general amnesty, which is usual and proper to be passed in these cases, where a crown is obtained by force of arms.

Thus I hope I have, in some measure, and as far as is possible at this distance of time, without knowledge of particular circumstances, reconciled these glaring absurdities, which Mr. Walpole has strained to make appear; and I hope, at the same time, answered that other *probatum* of Mr. Walpole's,

13. *That all that relates to Sir Robert Brackenbury is no less false, Brackenbury being too good a man to die for a tyrant or murderer, or too bad a man to have refused being his accomplice.*

Now to proceed :

14. *That Sir Thomas More and Lord Bacon both confess, that many doubted whether the two Princes were murdered in Richard's days or not ; and it certainly never was proved that they were murdered by Richard's order.*

I will allow these authors do say as much ; yet, from their manner of expression, I think it very strongly appears they were themselves of different opinions. And yet why should Sir Thomas More shew this complaisance



to Henry, seeing, as Mr. Walpole has before told us, that he had “recently been marked with the displeasure of the crown?”—As I am in possession of both these historians, though I do not aspire to the valuable contemporaries, I will beg leave to copy their respective assertions upon this head. Sir Thomas More, after taking notice of Richard’s obtaining the crown, by what Mr. Walpole calls a “free election,” and compares with the election of King William, continues, “After this mocked election, than was he crowned the . . . . day of the same month, (June)<sup>d</sup>, and that solemnity was furnished with the selfe same provision that was appointed for the coronation of his nephew<sup>e</sup>. Now fell the mischiefes thick. And as the thinge euil gotten is neuer well kept: through all the time of his reygne, neuer ceased there cruel death and slaughter, till his own destruction

<sup>d</sup> In my old edition of Sir Thomas More, which is the first, the day of the month is omitted, though the month is not. Richard was crowned, Mr. Walpole says, the 6th of July. If the mistake in dates is one reason of Mr. Walpole’s great exception to this author, I am sure this mistake seems of no very great consequence.

<sup>e</sup> I cannot help thinking, that this information of Sir Thomas More explains, what has been observed before, upon the curious coronation-roll, which Sir Thomas probably may have seen; and hence it may have the appearance, to an already-prejudiced eye, as if the preparations made for Edward the Fifth’s coronation were made for Richard particularly: hence the cloaths for Edward’s wear on his coronation day, are supposed to have been made in order to deck him out a foolish figure in his uncle’s procession.

“ended

“ ended it. But as he finished his time with the beste  
 “ death, and the most righteous, that is towyt his own :  
 “ so began he with the most piteous and wicked, I mean  
 “ the lamentable murther of his innocent nephews, the  
 “ young King and his tender brother, whose death and  
 “ final infortune hath natheles so far comen in question,  
 “ that some remaine yet in doubt, whether they were in  
 “ his days destroy’d or no. Not for that only that Perkin  
 “ Warbeck by *many folkes malice and more folkes folly*, so  
 “ long space abusing the worlde was wel with Princes as  
 “ the poorer people reputed and taken for the younger  
 “ of those two, but for that also that *all thynges wer in*  
 “ *late dayes so covertly demean’d, one thing pretended, and*  
 “ *another meant, that there was nothyng so plaine and*  
 “ *openly proved but that yet for the common custome of close*  
 “ *and covert dealing, men had it ever inwardly suspect ; as*  
 “ many wel counterfeited jewels make the true mis-  
 “ trusted.”

All that can be inferred from the above to strengthen  
 Mr. Walpole’s hypotheses, seems to amount only to this,  
 that there was a party in the kingdom, great sticklers for  
 the house of York, who took all the pains they could to  
 give about stories of their own forging, in order to shake  
 Henry in his throne, to raise suspicions in the minds of  
 credulous people to prejudice this *Welsh intruder*, as Mr.

Walpole

Walpole calls him, and to favour the plot of Perkin Warbeck. And I hope it will be allowed me, that nothing was more possible or probable than that such a party should have existed in Henry's reign, with these arts, finesses, and subtilties.

Now let us see what Lord Bacon says.

“ To discover about Perkin Warbeck. — The King  
 “ (Henry the Seventh) chose to act by countermining.  
 “ His purposes were two. The one, to lay open the  
 “ abuse; the other, to breake the conspiracy. To de-  
 “ tect the abuse, there were but two wayes; the first, to  
 “ make it manifest to the world that the Duke of Yorke  
 “ was *indeed murther'd*; the other, to prove that were he  
 “ dead or alive, yet Perkin was a counterfeit.”

“ There was but foure persons that could speake *upon*  
 “ *knowledge* to the murther of the Duke of Yorke<sup>a</sup>. Sir  
 “ James

<sup>a</sup> It is insisted on, p. 57, 127, “ That *Greene, the nameless page, and Will Slaughter, having never been questioned about the murder, there is no reason to believe what is related of them in the supposed tragedy.*” I don't see this follows at all; Lord Bacon mentions nothing of them; though having Sir Thomas More's account before him, he might have contradicted that part of the story, if he had had reason to think it erroneous. Probably Lord Bacon, who wanted to be concise upon this matter, did not think it worth while to mention them: besides, what would their evidence have amounted to? no more than this; Greene's, that he had carried a letter to Brackenbury, and that in consequence thereof  
 the



“ James Tirrel, (*the employ'd man from King Richard*)  
 “ John Dighton and Miles Forrest his servants, (*the two*  
 “ *butchers or tormentors*) and the priests of the Tower  
 “ that buried them, of which foure Miles Forrest and the  
 “ priests were dead, and there remained alive only Sir  
 “ James Tirrel and John Dighton. These two the King  
 “ caused to be committed to the Tower, and examined  
 “ touching the manner of the death of the innocent  
 “ Princes. They both agreed in a tale (as the King gave  
 “ out) to this effect,———.”

Thus far I cannot comprehend there is any thing in Lord Bacon's account, but what gives strong reason to conceive, that it was the most common opinion at the day he lived, that the Princes were murdered by the command of Richard, except of some few perhaps, who had been blinded and seduced by violent partizans of the house of York, or at least those who were dissatisfied with Henry.

the Princes were *not murdered*.—All the nameless page could have told was, that he had recommended Tirrel, so brought himself into a scrape; and probably knew nothing of the issue of his recommendation. As to Black Will, who guarded the Princes, he might have been ordered out of the way by Tirrel, who having the keys of the Tower, was become Lieutenant for that night, and had the command there. But the Lord Bacon mentions nothing of them; they might all have been dead, perhaps murdered, though their deaths were not of consequence enough to be particularly noted by Historians. Besides, as to the page, I have before observed why probably his name was not known.

Lord Bacon seems to affirm it positively, as a thing well known I suppose, that there were only so many persons who could speak from *knowledge*; he expressly calls Sir James Tirrel, the *employ'd man* from King Richard; and the servants, Miles Forrest and Dighton, *butchers* and *tormentors*. In short, all the advantage Mr. Walpole can take from this authority, is the parenthesis, *as the King gave out*, which might possibly be more a preciseness in the author's way of expressing himself than any sneer.—My Lord then indeed says farther, “ Thus much was “ then delivered abroad, to be the effect of these examin- “ ations. But the King neverthelesse made no use of “ them in any of his declarations. Whereby (as it were) “ these examinations left the business somewhat per- “ plexed. And as for James Tirrel, he was some time “ after beheaded in the Tower yarde for other matters of “ treason. But John Dighton, who it seemeth spake “ best for the King, was forthwith set at liberty, and was “ the principal means of divulging the tradition.”—Here I will allow there is good hold for Mr. Walpole to take, in support of his string of arguments. But if this is all, it is but a weak support. *The King made no use of these examinations in any of his declarations*, says Lord Bacon. Very true, will Mr. Walpole say, because he found they did not turn to his account. What, was Sir James Tirrel confined in the Tower with John Dighton, and after the  
2 King

King giving out they both agreed in a tale, could that tale be made no use of, no advantage taken of it in Henry's declarations? I dare say, if it had been necessary to the cause, Henry would have contrived to have reaped some benefit from these examinations; but it is likely he saw no need of it; he had satisfied himself that the Duke of York was murdered, and he considered that if he published the whole of these examinations, he must have made known so shocking and wicked a scene, that he could not have avoided making examples, and punishing the persons concerned, whom he might think would stand him in better stead, by being suffered to live and tell what they knew in public. Accordingly we see Dighton was let to live, and Sir James suffered death for another crime; Sir James, who, notwithstanding his being made a Captain of Guisnes by Henry, could nevertheless not help manifesting his want of loyalty to the conqueror of his old master. But whatever ambiguity may appear in this narration of Lord Bacon, who wrote only in James the First's reign, and might have been uncertain himself, betwixt two stories, which to believe; Sir Thomas More, who wrote his history of Richard, not thirty years<sup>a</sup> after these

<sup>a</sup> I wonder whether Mr. Walpole would not allow that an ingenious man, at this day, though in no very exalted station, might write a very authentic history of George the First, or the beginning of George the Second's reign, and even obtain some very good materials and credible testimonies; especially if such



these facts, (and I own I cannot see why, at so short a distance of time, he should have wanted the best and most authentic accounts); Sir Thomas More, I say, asserts it positively, "Very trouthe it is, and well known, that  
 " at such time as Syr James Tirel was in the Tower  
 " for treason committed agaynste the most famous Prince  
 " King Henry VII. bothe Dighton and he were examined,  
 " and confests'd the matter in manner above written."  
 Then he concludes, which shews his own opinion, " And  
 " thus, as I have learned of them that much knew, and  
 " little cause had to lye, wer these two noble Princes,  
 " these innocent children, borne of most royal bloode,  
 " brought up in great wealth, likely long to live and  
 " reigne and rule in the realm, by traiterous tyranny  
 " taken and depryved of their estate, shortly shutte up in  
 " prison and privily slaine and murther'd, theyr bodies  
 " cast God wote wher, by the cruel ambition of their  
 " unnatural uncle and his dispiteous tormentors."

But if the authorities of these our own Historians have no weight with the incredulous Mr. Walpole, let us imitate his own example and look abroad, at least for confirmations of the report, that the Princes were mur-

horrid tragedies had been acted in that reign as in Richard the Third's. I think an author could not be deceived concerning them, whatever he might with regard to proceedings in a cabinet-council, upon meer political matters.

dered

dered by Richard's order. Supposing we take the word of *honest Philip de Comines*, "an author, Mr. Walpole  
 " says, of far greater authority (than our own), whose  
 " negligent simplicity and veracity are *unquestionable*;  
 " who had great opportunities of knowing our story, and  
 " whose testimony is corroborated by our records." He  
 lived too, it must be observed, about the time of our  
 present subject. He says then, speaking of the pretended  
 precontract and marriage of Edward the Fourth with  
 Eleanor Butler, discovered to Richard by the spiteful  
 Bishop of Bath, "A cette heure dont je parle, cet  
 " Evêque de Bath découvrit cette matiere a ce Duc de  
 " Glocestre, dont il luy aida bien a executer *son mauvais*  
 " *vouloir : et fit mourir ses deux neveux et se fit Roy—*"

In another place he says again,—<sup>b</sup> "Tantost après que  
 " le Roy Edouard fut mort, le Roy nostre maitre en fut  
 " adverty, et n'en fit nul joye, ne semblant quand il le  
 " sceut ; et peu de jours après receut lettres du Duc de  
 " Glocestre, qui s'estoit fait Roy d'Angleterre, et se  
 " fignoit Richard, *lequel avoit fait mourir les deux fils du*  
 " *Roy Edouard son frere* ; lequel Roy Richard requeroit  
 " l'amitié du Roy & croy qu'il eut bien voulu r'avoir  
 " cette pension : mais le Roy ne voulut respondre a

<sup>a</sup> p. 365. tom. 1.

<sup>b</sup> p. 416. tom. 1.

“ ses lettres, n’ouïr le message et l’estima tres cruel et  
 “ mauvais : car apres le trespas du Roy Edouard, ledit  
 “ Duc de Clocestre avoit fait hommage a son neveu,  
 “ comme a son Roy et souverain seigneur, et incontinent  
 “ après commit ce cas.”

Thus I think we are at last—*per tót discrimina rerum*, come to that main and important question, whether *Edward the Fifth, and his brother Richard Duke of York, were murdered in the Tower, and by the orders of their uncle, then King Richard the Third?* This, without

<sup>d</sup> Since what is above written, I have, in the library of this society, discovered the old contemporary *Fabian*, (but I cannot meet there with the Chronicle of Croyland); and though I would not lose time in any minute perusal of him now, when I hope I have done my work without him; yet I was willing just to see what he said of the death of the Princes; and it appears there, even from the first, that it was *commonly* imputed to Richard. “ And in this yere, says he, the  
 “ foresaid grudge encreasing, and the more so for as moche as the *common fame*  
 “ went, that King Richard had within the Towre put unto secrete death the  
 “ two sonnes of his brother Edward the Fourth.”—This, Mr. Walpole will perhaps say, is but mentioning the fact *indirectly*; and he does term it, p. 72. *meer report*. Yet it is so bold an assertion, that most likely this part of Fabian’s history was not published till after the battle of Bosworth-field, whatever the first part might have been. But how could Fabian, or any contemporary author, mention any fact of this kind, before the examination of Tirrel and Dighton in Henry the Seventh’s reign, otherwise than as a *report*? There is no doubt but Richard took care it should be done as secretly as possible; therefore, without the authors had it from the very mouth of the King, from Brackenbury, Tirrel, Greene, the *nameless* or rather *secret* page, Forrest, Dighton, the priest, or Black Will, all whose mouths were stopt as principals or accessaries in the murder, how could any man know more of it than merely by whisper or report?



straining any point, without wresting the sense of authors to my own purpose, without new authorities, but chiefly from those alledged by Mr. Walpole, I hope I have pretty plainly and satisfactorily proved, at least I flatter myself, that if Mr. Walpole's arguments have hitherto been accounted of any weight, mine will balance the scales.

And having proved thus much, I trust all the rest of Mr. Walpole's *probata* must give way; so that it were losing a deal of time, as well as tiring my readers, to follow him quite through his recapitulation.

However, I cannot avoid yet taking notice of some few, which seem to me quite problematical, and meer conjecture, viz.

*That it is indubitable, that Richard's first idea was to keep the crown but till Edward the fifth should attain the age of twenty-four.*

O rare uncle! what, and then unking himself! I doubt much about that. Where was the use then of being King? Could he not have taken as much care of his nephews, and — *ne quid detrimenti caperet respublica*, by his office of Protector? O! but

*With*

*With this view he did not create his own son Prince of Wales, till after he had proved the bastardy of his brother's children.*

He could not create his own son Prince of Wales before he was King himself; and I have understood Mr. Walpole all along, that the children were bastardized before he assumed the crown; that it was declared by the supplication of the *three estates*, that Edward the Fourth had been married to Eleanor Butler before he married the widow Woodville; and though perhaps Mr. Walpole would mean that Richard waited for a ratification of this ignomy fixed upon the poor children, and particularly upon the boy, who was to have had his crown again when he arrived at the age of four and twenty, by a real and legal parliament, this does not prove that he ever intended Edward should be restored. It was certainly designed before Richard took the crown, as appears from the roll which Mr. Walpole quotes, that Edward's children should be bastardized.

It is farther alledged,

*That when his son was dead, Richard was so far from intending to get rid of his wife, that he proclaimed his nephews,*

*phews, first the Earl of Warwick, and then the Earl of Lincoln, his heirs apparent.*

I am a batchelor, as well as Mr. Walpole, and know very little of matrimony ; but I am informed by married men, that if a man, *vivâ uxore*, declares his nephews, cousins, or any others, his heirs apparent, it is a sign he intends to have no more children by his wife : and the married ladies tell me in that case, they should think a husband not very fond, and rather inclined to get rid of them.—So again,

*That there is not the least probability of his having poisoned his wife, who died of a languishing distemper, &c.*

I think nothing so like poison as a languishing distemper. All poisons, I appeal to the faculty, may be made to operate slower or faster as the doctor pleases ; and it certainly was best, Richard's wife should die by a slow poison ; for a quick one might have discovered her disorder.

Now with regard to Perkin Warberck, whom Mr. Walpole would fain prove to have been the true Duke of York, it is almost unnecessary to enter into all the particulars ; for as it has not hitherto been fairly proved, that

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the



the two Princes, Edward the Fifth, and his brother, were not murdered by Richard the Third, so it will remain as doubtful, that Perkin Warbeck was really the latter of these two, and no impostor. Let us however just take a cursory view of some of the points which Mr. Walpole thinks so evident.

*It is probable, he says, the Queen Dowager knew her second son was living, and connived at the appearance of Lambert Simnel, to feel the temper of the nation.*

Likewise,

*That Henry the Seventh certainly thought that she and the Earl of Lincoln were privy to the existence of Richard Duke of York, and that Henry lived in terror of his appearance.*

In the arguing these two points, Mr. Walpole would suppose, that the Queen Dowager, in her sanctuary at Westminster, would not have delivered up her daughters to Richard, and bestowed one of them on the murderer of her sons, if she had not been convinced he certainly was not such : and hence we are to imagine, that her eldest son, Edward the Fifth, was either living, or died naturally, and that she knew the other son was really in life.

But

But surely it is as reasonable to conceive, that the same poor unfortunate woman, who, seeing herself overpowered, her eldest son taken out of her guardianship by force, and her nearest relations put to death, fled to a sanctuary with what children she had left her, yet afterwards delivered up her second son to her enemy, was in like manner intimidated to give up her daughters, and even consent to the marriage of the one with the very man who was the cause of all her woes, her utter enemy and oppressor. Wretched Queen! what could she do? Her brother, Lord Rivers, upon whose councils she had relied, and all her friends were cut off. Had she not endeavoured to oblige Richard, and submitted in every thing to his furious will and pleasure, what is imagined would have become of her? The notion that she so courteously, and even as it were voluntarily, delivered up the Duke of York, is really forced upon us by Mr. Walpole.<sup>b</sup> Sir Thomas More, whom he has no manner of patience with, “has exhausted all his eloquence and imagination, says he, to work up a piteous scene, in which “the Queen is made to excite our compassion in the “highest degree.” But the Chronicle of Croyland affirms, that though *force* was used to oblige Cardinal Bouchier, Archbishop of Canterbury, to go and make the demand, yet the Queen “Gratanter annuens dimisit

<sup>b</sup> P. 35.

"*puerum.*" It is plain hence, that the Archbishop was sensible he was charged with a commission which would produce a most lamentable scene in the sanctuary, as it was cruel and barbarous. And though it is possible the Queen at last, upon the Archbishop's representations, "*Gratanter annuens dimisit puerum,*" it cannot surely be thought, that in her situation, and under the apprehensions she must naturally have, she shewed no reluctance, she shed no tear at parting with a child she could not be sure what was to be done with. I find it at least too difficult to believe she was so unnatural a mother. She could surely not, without great want of sense, have imagined Richard had any good design on the boy he so peremptorily sent for ; because where was the danger likely to befall Richard from the child continuing with his mother, if Richard meant no more than to govern as Lord Protector for the King, whom he had actually got in his custody ? The Duke of York could have no pretensions to the crown whilst the King lived ; and as long as the Protector intended the King should live, he need have been under no apprehensions from the Duke of York.

In like manner it is natural to suppose she delivered up her daughters, sensible that reluctance or resistance could avail nothing : possibly too (and this it is that provokes her son-in-law Henry afterwards to confine her,) she  
might



might have been prevailed on to deliver up her daughters from meer pacific views, which, now she found herself destitute of all power to execute her first designs, induced her to make the best terms for herself she could ; and she might have entertained no small hopes, that if Richard married one of her daughters, which we may easily conceive, together with many other fair things, he promised to do before he demanded them, she might with safety quit her asylum, and be more at liberty to take such steps as she might find necessary, and the good, as well as safety, of her poor remaining family might require. In these weak councils what did she do ? the very daughter she had promised the Earl of Richmond, she consented to marry to Richard. And so we may imagine—*Hinc illæ lachrymæ*, when Henry got the crown. She engaged in his plot, when it was first set on foot by Buckingham, the Bishop of Ely, and the old Countess of Richmond; after that quitted it, probably because she had reasons (though perhaps only such as might have arisen from the timidity and suspense of a woman,) to think it not likely to succeed, and determined to make at any rate her peace with Richard: not because she wanted to have some of her children on the throne, in order to recover her own power; (for with all Mr. Walpole's partiality to Richard, he will allow, I hope, that this king was not a likely man to let his good sister-in-law, and now about to be

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mother-in-law, assume any power or share in government ; ) but because it is likely the poor helpless woman was frightened out of her wits. For, with all due compassion for, and good opinion of this Queen, I do think she was not an heroine, and without the advice, assistance, and support of her brother and sons, was in no wise calculated to guard and protect her infant son Edward against so over-bearing an antagonist as his uncle Gloucester. This her dying husband, as I observed before, had foreseen, and therefore thought proper, however late, to bring about a reconciliation between her kindred and the Lords of the court, which, from the time and manner in which it was undertaken, proved not so effectual as he wished.

But from all these simple proceedings of the Queen, I do not see it follows that she was conscious her younger son was living ; for if she was, why did she at first engage in the plot with Richmond ? Why did she not kindle up one in favour of her own son ? If therefore she did tamper in that of Lambert Simnel, I had rather suppose it owing to a resentment for some secret ill-treatment she had received from her son-in-law Henry, some apprehensions which might have been suggested to her by others, than to a knowledge of Richard Duke of York being alive, and a desire to feel the temper of the nation, before she actually produced him.

Now

Now that Perkin was really no impostor, but the true Duke of York, what are those strong presumptions alleged by Mr. Walpole?

Here they are:

1. *That the different conduct of Henry with regard to Lambert Simnel and Perkin Warbeck, implies how different an opinion he had of them; that in the first case he used the most natural and most rational methods, proves him an impostor; whereas his whole behaviour in Perkin's case was mysterious, and betrayed his belief or doubt that Warbeck was the true Duke of York.*

To comment upon this, I must first declare it exceeds my poor comprehension, that, if the Duke of York really had made his escape out of the Tower, it has never been taken notice of by any one author at or near the time, till this Perkin starts up, when all they say amounts to not a tittle more, than that he was supposed or put upon the nation as the true Duke of York: and I believe all agree in this story about the Duchess of Burgundy, sister of Edward the Fourth, who picked up this youth, and instructed him to personate her nephew. “No, says Mr. Walpole, it is most credible, that the Duchess sup-

‘ P. 89.

“ ported

“ported Perkin, on the persuasion he was her nephew.” He should have been kind enough then to have told us likewise, how long this young Duke was supported by his aunt; when it was he made his escape out of the Tower; and how it came to pass, that no rumour of this had ever been spread before the appearance of Perkin.

But let us see Henry's conduct, which differed so much in regard to Simnel and Perkin. Henry having overcome Simnel, and having produced the true Earl of Warwick, whom he had kept all this while shut up in the Tower, had no cause to apprehend any farther danger from Simnel, a poor silly wretch, who had been put upon this scheme by discontented courtiers, and partizans of the house of York. What mattered it then to take away his life? It was as well to let him live: and though I am far from thinking Henry a man of such magnanimity and such extreme wisdom, as Lord Bacon, out of compliment to the monarch in whose reign he lived and wrote, thought proper to represent; yet I think it not improbable, that Henry might have been advised to pardon the poor wretch, who was seduced to do what he did, and be contented with punishing the instigators. Nevertheless, when another impostor was put upon the stage, another conduct was to be chosen, lest lenity repeated might be productive of too many disturbances of this sort. Besides, supposing the Duke



Duke of York was murdered, (as I hope I have shewn was most probable) he had nobody to produce, as he did the Earl of Warwick, to convince the deluded multitude of the imposture. He was therefore under necessity of going a different way to work, and finally, to intimidate and prevent any such upstarts from giving him any further molestation, punishing such imposture with death. O! but it must be granted,

2. *That it was morally impossible for the Duchess of Burgundy, at the distance of twenty-seven years, to instruct a Flemish lad so perfectly in all that had passed in the court of England, that he would not have been detected in a few hours.*

I do not comprehend why she might not, from what information and intelligence she received from England, instruct him as much as it was possible the Duke of York could himself know.—What! “All that had passed in the court of England?”—How could young Richard himself, supposing him alive, have known much what passed? If he escaped soon out of the Tower after his uncle took him from his mother, he must have lain concealed in some corner of the kingdom all this while, where he could have known nothing, or have went over directly to the Duchess of Burgundy, where he could

know no more than herself, if so much. He was about nine years of age when he was taken out of the sanctuary, and confined in the Tower with his brother Edward the Fifth ; and what story could he have to relate, that might not seem plausible, and which any body could contradict ? All that could be expected of him, or that might occur to ask him, must have been general matters, of which the Duchess of Burgundy might have had sufficient intelligence to instruct him withal. Besides, I do not understand she was alone in this plot ; there were others, grandees of the kingdom, (were there not ?) who might very easily have instructed him where she might have failed. But it is self-evident, according to Mr. Walpole,

3. *That she could not inform him, nor could he know what had passed in the Tower, unless he was the true Duke of York. And,*

4. *That if he was not the true Duke of York, Henry had nothing to do but to confront him with Tirrel and Dighton, and the imposture must have been discovered.*

What does Mr. Walpole imagine passed in the Tower whilst this poor Prince was, as is supposed, under confinement there, that he could give any account of ? I suppose he slept and eat, and slept and eat, and slept again.

again. Can we believe he saw much company? if he did, then they surely were of his friends, who might afterwards have had an hand in this plot of the Dukes of Burgundy, and acquainted Perkin with all they knew of the pastime within the Tower. But,

“ If he had been confronted with Tirrel and Dighton, “ the imposture must have been discovered.”—Then Mr. Walpole would have taken Tirrel’s and Dighton’s word in this case, though he would not for the murder.—But I thought Tirrel had been Master of the Horse to Richard the Third, and the story about Tirrel and the Tower was all fabulous; therefore how could Tirrel tell any thing about the Duke of York? — O! but Tirrel and Dighton both did confess that they murdered Edward the Fifth and the Duke of York;—therefore there was no need of confronting Perkin Warbeck with them. For if they really did not murder the Princes, as they were made, or given out, to confess by Henry, they then knew no more of the Duke of York than other people. If they really did murder them, as they declared, what use was there in confronting them?

<sup>b</sup> But we can go farther, says Mr. Walpole, and

<sup>a</sup> Though Sir James Tirrel was continued probably in the Tower till his execution, yet, as Dighton was out, and at liberty, can we suppose he never had a sight of Perkin?



5. *That Perkin was never confronted with the Queen Dowager, and the Princesses her daughters, proves that Henry did not dare to trust to their acknowledging him.*

Was not the Queen Dowager shut up in a monastery? And was it worth while to fetch her out, or carry Perkin down to her, for the sake of confronting them, in order only to discover an impostor, which was made manifest without this trouble, by the confession of Tirrel and Dighton? And what reason is there to doubt that he had been seen by Henry's Queen and the Princesses? "The King himself, says Lord Bacon, saw him sometimes from a window, or in a passage."—Hence Mr. Walpole concludes the Queen and Princesses never did see him. I don't, I confess, understand this conclusion; and it appears a syllogism of a very extraordinary mode. Again it is insisted,

6. *That it is not pretended that Perkin ever failed in language, accent, or circumstances; and that his likeness to Edward the Fourth is allowed.*

As I have before observed, I cannot take time at present to scrutinize all the Historians who wrote upon this subject; yet I do not recollect, and certainly Mr. Walpole does not quote any authority, that Perkin spoke English

any otherwise than *perfectly*, which I will maintain does not imply that he had no foreign accent. I myself know many foreigners who speak English as perfectly, even to the very idioms, as natives, and more properly than our vulgar people, yet shew by their accent that they came from abroad. And I know likewise Englishmen, who have resided in other countries but a very few years, and have returned with a foreign accent<sup>b</sup>. Perkin therefore might very well be instructed by the Dukes of Burgundy, or by the English company he kept at Antwerp and Tournay, so as to speak the language very fluently, yet have a foreign accent; and I will likewise say so much in favour of him, that his accent might not have made it one jot the less improbable that he was the true Duke of York, who after some years residence with his aunt of Burgundy, might have acquired such accent. With regard to the great resemblance betwixt Perkin and the young Duke,—it was therefore that the Dukes pitched upon him to act this farce; was it not? And we may surely suppose, without difficulty, that two persons may be very much alike; we see such phenomena every day: at least I answer for myself, that I have known two persons so very much alike, though not the least related, that frequently the one has been accosted for the other. In short, to

<sup>b</sup> I have known people too who have gone to Ireland only for some months, and have returned with the brogue as strong as if they had been born there.

finish these argumentations concerning Perkin Warbeck, it is concluded lastly,

*That there are gross and manifest blunders in his pretended confession. And that Lord Bacon did not dare to adhere to this ridiculous account, but forges another, though in reality not much more credible.*

However much authors might differ as to the particulars of the confession, this however will be allowed, that they agreed there was a *confession*, and that Perkin did not confess himself to be *Duke of York*. We need not go farther than our own times for very different accounts of one and the same thing. And as to Perkin's being forced to read his confession by torture, I question it as much as Mr. Hume. Besides, when he was actually at the place of execution, he would hardly have been carried publicly away again to torture, if he had refused to read this confession, and declared himself Richard Duke of York. All I can say is, if he really was the true Duke of York, he must have had a poor, mean, abject soul, and was better hanged than crowned a King. He gave but small proofs of being the son of Edward the Fourth, and sprung from the blood of so many valiant and high-spirited Princes.

I shall



I shall not trouble my head about Mrs. Shore, but leave her story to take its chance in the world, and finish all I have to say for the present in answer to Mr. Walpole, in a few words, about the person of King Richard the Third.

Mr. Walpole brings four authentic testimonies to prove that Richard was, if not a very handsome man, at least not so ugly as he is represented to us.

“ The old Countess of Desmond, who had danced with Richard, declared he was the handsomest man in the room, except his brother Edward, and was *very well made*.”——Who was this old Countess of Desmond?—Did she tell Mr. Walpole so herself? If she did, she must have been a fine old Lady. If Mr. Walpole has received this intelligence from books, then the question is, whether these books are more to be credited than those Mr. Walpole has hitherto challenged? But Dr. Shaw, in his sermon, appealed to the people, whether Richard was not the express image of his father’s person. “ Not all the Protector’s power, says Mr. Walpole, could have kept the muscles of the mob in awe, and prevented their laughing at so ridiculous an apostrophe, had Richard been a little, crooked, wither’d, hump-back’d monster, as later Historians would have us believe.” Mr. Walpole

Walpole forgets that he tells us, in his recapitulation, " That it is not credible Richard gained the crown by a " sermon of Dr. Shaw, and a speech of the Duke of " Buckingham, if the people only *laughed* at those orators."—Now if they did not laugh out an *horse-laugh*, which might have been too insolent, we have no reason to insist upon it that they did not distend their muscles a little <sup>a</sup>. Besides, Mr. Walpole gives us leave to believe Historians<sup>b</sup>, that the people would not give a single huzza to the sermon <sup>c</sup>, and that Shaw never dared to shew his face afterwards.

There is however another authority, which is more unquestionable than any ; it is the curious drawing of which Mr. Walpole has given us two plates. I own if Richard was like those out-lines, he must have been a good pretty fellow in the face ; but there is something very disproportionate in the right arm which holds the sword ; it is

\* Old Nestor Ironside, the Guardian, distinguishes the laughs into five degrees :

The dimplers,	The grinners,
The smilers,	The horse-laughers.
The laughers,	

It is not improbable but Dr. Shaw's audience might have consisted of one of these orders, though not of the last, which would have made too much noise, and have drowned the Doctor's voice. It is possible likewise such a loud chorus might have been mistaken for an huzza, and this they were aware of.

<sup>b</sup> p. 34.

<sup>c</sup> p. 43.

such a kind of fore-shortening, if it is intended for such, as I never saw in my life, and only proves either that one of his arms was really withered, as writers tell us, or that the painter of that portrait had but little skill in handling a pencil. Then what a figure is the Queen standing by him in the second plate ! I am therefore, with great submission to Mr. Walpole's refined taste in matters of Virtú, of opinion that the art of painting and drawing in those days was not in greatest perfection, probably not better than in the days of Richard the Second, of which we have a specimen I think in Westminster Abbey, not vastly superior to a Chinese daub. In short, as nothing is expressed but the out-lines in this drawing, which Mr. Walpole bought at Vertue's sale ; and as he does not know where it was taken from, and only conjectures it might have been copied from some window ; nor when it might have been painted or drawn, we can form no positive judgment from hence. Besides, cannot we suppose that limners flattered in those days as they do in these ? We now see frequently a very comely portrait of a very homely person ; and *e contra*. We see too now of days a number of prints of particular personages in the shops, yet most of them varying in their likenesses. I think Bishop Burnet tells us Charles the Second was a very handsome man, yet the prints and portraits of him seem rather to evince the contrary. I never  
yet



yet saw a portrait of Mary Queen of Scots, though there are some of her by capital masters, that ever gave me the idea of a beautiful woman; she appears to be a true raw-bon'd Scotch woman, with a broad face, high cheek-bones: and all that can be said of her is, that she is not ugly. The engravings by Vertue, or Houbraken, represent her as such. So that upon the whole there is no relying upon prints or portraits for an exact resemblance of a person; and there is nothing so possible as that Mr. Walpole has unluckily stumbled upon a drawing which may greatly flatter King Richard<sup>m</sup>. As it is, he owns he cannot help thinking there is some want of symmetry

<sup>m</sup> Another reason I have to believe this drawing cannot be other than a most flattering likeness of King Richard, if it is any likeness at all, is, that he could not surely be so young as represented there; and this portrait was certainly taken after he was King, as appears from the sword, globe, and *crown*, which is no ducal coronet, but a royal crown. Richard has here the countenance of a lad not above twenty at most; whereas, considering that his brother King Edward the Fourth died in his forty-second or forty-third year, we may, unless Mr. Walpole can bring palpable proofs to the contrary, conclude Richard was three or four and thirty at least when he usurped the crown. His father, the Duke of York, was killed at Wakefield, in the year 1460, which was about twenty-three years before Richard the Third's usurpation. He was not a meer child when his father was killed, the Earl of Rutland, his immediate elder brother, who lost his life in the same battle, being twelve or thirteen; and there were three daughters younger than Richard. Supposing him therefore about ten, we have the age above stated.

in the shoulders, that is, one shoulder is higher than the other; and when this appears from the front of any person, it is an hundred to one but he is hump-back'd, or very near it.—From John Rous, whatever construction Mr. Walpole may put upon the passage he quotes, it is surely very evident, that Richard was but a strange figure; for what else can be collected from these words, “*Parvæ staturæ erat, curtam habens faciem, inæquales humeros, dexter superior, sinister inferior;*” which, that the ladies may judge, we will render into English: *He was of short stature, a short or curtailed visage, and unequal shoulders, the right higher, and the left lower.*

This account given by Rous, Mr. Walpole gives credit to; for Rous, says he, “saw Richard at Warwick in “the interval of his two coronations.” Yet he will believe him no longer when he says, “that Richard remained two years in his mother’s womb, and came “forth at last with teeth, and hair on his shoulders.” I doubt much, as well as Mr. Walpole, whether the *Fellows* and *Licentiates* of Warwick-lane will allow it possible; that a woman can go two years with her burden; yet, after all, though he appeared so handsome to the old Countess of Desmond, was represented as such by Dr.

4

Shaw, and appears so in Mr. Walpole's drawing, he might nevertheless have been born with teeth, and might have had all his life a good tuft of hair on his shoulders. In short, it must be granted, that these two circumstances do not at all contradict Mr. Walpole's opinion of Richard's comeliness: the hair on the shoulders was a deformity not visible; and Mezeray informs us, (how true I will not insist) that Lewis the Fourteenth, celebrated by all writers as an exceeding handsome man, was born with teeth.

I have now nothing more to offer in answer to Mr. Walpole's entertaining DOUBTS; to which, notwithstanding this liberty I have taken with them, I pay no small deference. It will easily appear, that I see many things in a very different light, and understand authors in a very different sense from what Mr. Walpole does; consequently have drawn different conclusions from certain strings of arguments, than he has; and should these conclusions be erroneous, I am very sincerely desirous of being set right. Had it suited my time to have consulted the different historians he quotes, I probably should have been upon more equal ground with him; as it is, I have only attempted, as cursorily as possible, to shew that Mr. Walpole's arguments carry not all that weight and conviction



viction with them he himself may conceive. If I have in any degree succeeded, I shall think this interval I have stolen from my other studies not altogether so ill employed; and now returning to them again — *Verbum non amplius addam.*

## F I N I S.



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